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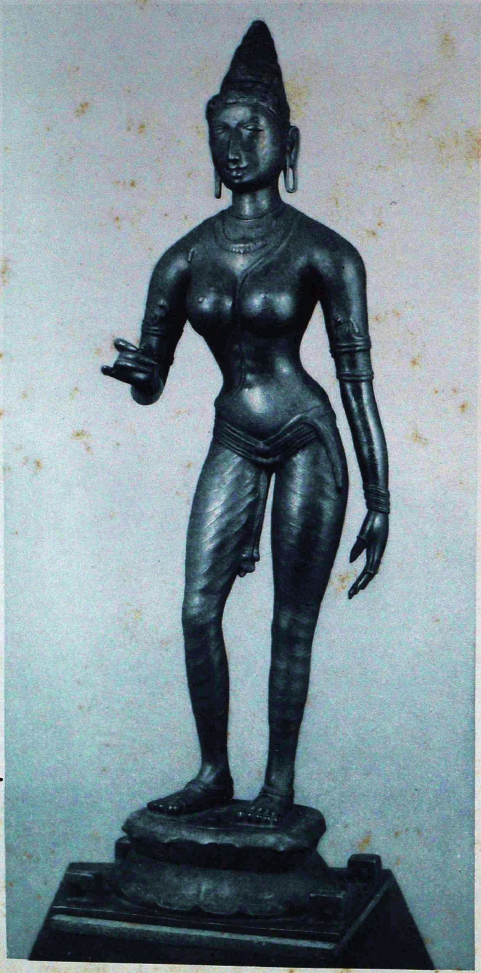

I.—A NEW SOUTH INDIAN BRONZE.

By ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY.

THE large South Indian "bronze" recently acquired by the Freer Gallery, Washington, D. C., U. S. A., may well be thought of as the finest known example of its kind. It is made of copper, perhaps with some admixture of other metals, and stands 3 feet $4\frac{3}{16}$ inches or m.1.021 in height overall, including the pedestal. Beyond the facts that it is a female figure, that the right hand is raised in the 'kataka-mukha' finger position, i.e., as if holding a flower, and that as the form of the pedestal shows this is a moveable image ('bhoga mūrti' or 'utsava vigraha') adapted to processional uses on special occasions, we have nothing to guide us as to the iconographic significance. As it stands, the figure represents a woman in the flower of her youth, full-bosomed but still slender-hipped. Her beauty is disturbing, but typical and ideal, not an individual or transient 'beauté de diable'; and must, in accordance with all Indian belief, be regarded as the natural outward manifestation of an innate virtue.

If this be a goddess, we may regard her, following the suggestion of a flower, presumably a lotus, indicated as held in the right hand, as Lakṣmī, the consort of Vishṇu; or possibly as Pārvatī, or as she is so often called in the South, Śivakāmī, Śiva's Darling. But the figure may equally well be the posthumous image of a deified queen in the form of a divinity corresponding to her faith. In the presence of a figure without attributes, and with nothing more than the living quality of aristocratic and yet ardent life embodied in it to direct us, we find ourselves in the predicament of Bharata in the Second Act of the 'Pratimā Nāṭaka' of Bhāsa, when he enters a 'pratimā-gṛha' and cannot tell whether the statues in it are those of deities or ancestors; he cannot recognize particular deities because there are no attributes which might serve as external marks of identification ('bahiślingam'). On the other hand, though they are exquisitely wrought, and are said to be informed with feeling ('bhāva'), they are clearly not "portraits" in our sense, for even when he is told that they are images of ancestors, he does not recognize the image of his own father until it is pointed out to him.

A comparison may, of course, be made with the well-known metal images of Krishna Devarāya and his queens, and of Venkata, at Tirupati; (1). but here there is a more evident intention to reproduce, if not a personal likeness, at least the details of contemporary costume, and moreover, some of the statues are inscribed with the names of the persons represented. They may, too, be statues of the kings as donors, made in the lifetime of their originals, and not like the images of the 'Pratimā Nāṭaka,' posthumous figures.

On the whole, one is tempted to regard this as the statue of a deified queen, and in this case to recall such historical cases as that of the widowed Queen Sembiyan-Mahādevī, of Ala-nādu, who built, endowed and renovated a great number of shrines in the second half of the tenth century, and whose statue was set up in a temple by Rājendra Cola in A.D. 1020. (2) It may be assumed that in such cases where a temple is erected in honour of a deified queen, that there must have been both a 'mūla vigraha' in the main shrine, and also an 'utsava vigraha' for processional purposes. But naturally, there is no authority to suggest an identification of our statue with that of this particular queen.

The date of South Indian images is notoriously difficult to estimate. It is fairly certain that some of those known date back at least to the thirteenth century, and that these were by no means the earliest of their kind. (3) So far as internal evidence goes, one is inclined to call those images earliest in

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(1) A. S. I., A. R., 1911-12, Pl. LXXXVI; or H. I. I. A., Fig. 245.

(2) South Indian Epigraphy, Ann. Rep., 1925-26, pp. 104-5.

(3) *See* Discussion in H. I. I. A., p. 126.

which the aesthetic quality is highest, and in which the forms are most rounded and least wiry, in other words, when the plastic volume is most felt. In these respects our image, though finer, is not unlike a seated female figure formerly in the Beardsell Collection and now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.(4) Beyond this, our image shows an unmistakable relationship with the forms of Pallava and early Cola sculpture. It may be compared, for example, with the figures of the queens of Mahendravarman I in the Ādivarāha Perumal excavated temple at Mahābalipuram;(5) and with the figures of the goddesses in niches on walls of the Paśupati-koyil temple of Tiruvālandurai-Mahādevār, between Tanjore and Kumbakonam, datable in the latter part of the ninth century. It is certainly not far removed from these in quality or in general aspect. On the whole, I am inclined to suggest a date at any rate not later than the close of the Cola period, about A.D. 1100.

(4) Cat. Indian Collections, II, Sculpture, Pl. LIII.

(5) Sastri, H. K., 'Two Statues of Pallava Kings at Mahābalipuram,' Mem., A. S. I., 26, 1926, Pl. II.

II.—ON A BOOK OF KINGS OF ABOUT 1200 A.D.

By E. BLOCHET.

THE number of Books of Kings (Shāhnāmāhs) which have been illustrated has always been limited, in Persia and Hindustan, like that of the Khamsah of Nizāmî, the illumination of which descends directly from that of the Book of Kings. The iconographic canon required that Firdausî's epic should have a considerable number of illustrations, and this tradition went back to the 10th century, to the very epoch of the composition of the poem.

The legend which was collected by the authors of the preface to the edition of Baisonghor, at the beginning of the 15th century, says that Mahmūd, Sultān of Ghazna, had arranged in his palace an apartment whose walls, decorated with frescoes by the best artists, were covered with scenes of battles which are frequently mentioned in the Book of Kings; one saw there cavalries equipped with Iranian and Turkish arms, the white elephants of the Khaghan of China, who had hurried to the rescue of Afrasyab, King of Turan, the palatine Rustam, the head of a lion with menacing teeth on his head and dressed in a panther-skin tunic. If one believes the tradition, Firdausî went there to seek for inspiration which made him sing of the secular struggle of Persia against Turan, against the Turks who had rushed from the frontiers of China to subjugate Iran; this story, as narrated by the historians in the play of Baisonghor, is very improbable and incredible; it was invented by scholars knowing nothing about poetry; we cannot suppose that Firdausî had need of a sumptuous apartment for rhyming his verses, that he required phantom appearances to excite his imagination. These are inventions of scholars who have no true conception of poetical inspiration.

Firdausî devoted thirty years to the writing of the Book of Kings; where is the man who will admit that a poet like Firdausî was capable of accepting the slavery in the Court of a King during the third part of a century and thus part with his freedom? But this legend shows that the illustration of the Book of Kings is as old as its composition, that the modern editions reproduce an ancient tradition which has maintained itself during a thousand years.

The number of paintings which illuminate the Book of Kings is always very considerable. This multiplicity has been injurious to the execution of the work which is nearly always hasty and mediocre. It decidedly exceeded the capacity of the artists who were obliged to work very quickly, to the detriment of the quality of their work. It is only in very carefully made copies, meant for the libraries of Kings or Princes, that we find a series of well executed illumina-

tions, possessing an artistic value; and it is certain that the execution of sixty-two paintings or thereabout constituted for the artists a tremendous task.(1)

The illustrations which have been reproduced here in the accompanying plates and which belong to a Calcutta collector, Mr. Ajit Ghose, are among the oldest known specimens of Mussulman painting; the characteristics of its handwriting show that it was copied at the end of the 12th or at the commencement of the 13th century, between 1180 and 1210, before the Mongol invasion, in the regions of the extreme west of Iran, probably outside the Persian frontier. It is unfortunate that the colophon of this manuscript with the concluding pages has disappeared, and that at present we know only the pages decorated with paintings, but the class and style of its illustrations, if they are compared with those of books bearing a date later than 1230, show that it belongs to a very limited class of books, illuminated in pre-Mongol schools, at the end of the 12th century and the opening years of the 13th century.(2)

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(1) Certainly no single artist has executed all the illustrations of the Books of Kings, or of the Khamsah of Nizāmî; these paintings were made under the direction of one or two able and renowned technicians, chiefs of an atelier who were helped by their pupils, reserving to themselves some pieces, two, three, or four, at which they worked with special care, and which are recognized at a glance (*vide* Le Bulletin de la Société Française de Reproduction de Manuscrits a Peintures, published by Comte Alexandre de Laborde, 1928, page 42); in this way one of the most beautiful Books of Kings which belongs to the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris, and which was illuminated at Tauris, under the reign of Shah Tahmasp, towards 1545, has a frontispiece decorated with a very beautiful picture covering two pages, representing the King of Persia as surrounded by his courtiers (Les Peintures des Manuscrits Orientaux de la Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, 1914, Plates 47, 48; 'Mussulman Painting,' Methuen, London, 1929, Plates 134, 135), while the rest of the illustrations are of much inferior quality; only in very exceptional cases, the quality remains invariable under the brush of one sole artist, as in the copy of the Khamsah of Nizāmî, which also belong to the Bibliothèque Nationale, and which was illustrated about the year 1620, during the reign of Shah Abbas the Great (Les Peintures des Manuscrits Orientaux de la Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, 1914, Plates 56—65; les Enluminures des Manuscrits Orientaux de la Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, 1926, Plates 88—90; 'Mussulman Painting,' Methuen, London, 1929, Plates 164—167) by a very skilful artist, Haider Kuli, the quality of whose works remains constant in all the illustrations of the book, such as in a splendid Būstān of S'adî, belonging to Mr. Chester Beatty, and of which all the paintings are known to be the authentic works of the celebrated Bihzad; but then these are exceptions; in an identical manner two artists, Muhammad and Mahmūd, have collaborated in the execution of two pictures and embellishments for a "Treasury of Mysteries," Makhzanal-asrar, by Nizāmî, which belongs to the Bibliothèque Nationale (Les Peintures des Manuscrits Orientaux, Plates 41, 42; les Enluminures des Manuscrits Orientaux, Plates 52, 53a; 'Mussulman Painting,' Plates 111, 114, 115). And it is exactly the same in the West; for it is enough to consider the paintings of Latin, Greek or French manuscripts, to realize that they are the works of diverse artists who work in one and the same atelier, under the direction of one and the same person; and this fact is noticed not merely in the restricted domain of the illumination of manuscripts, but also in that of large paintings in which the masters get help from their disciples—a fact which explains the difficulties raised, for instance, by the works of Rembrandt and so many other celebrated masters whose productiveness was enormous. It is quite probable that the master, chief of a studio, retouched and completed in their essential parts the works of their best pupils in a manner to give them the characteristics and to put on them, so to say, the artistic signature, while leaving untouched peculiarities that are not absolutely his, and which are interpretations of his method; it is said that an amateur presented himself one day to Corot, with a false Corot and asked him if the painting was authentic: "Certainly," said the master, "but your picture requires some retouches that I am going to execute." Then he placed it on the easel, and after an hour he gave it back to the amateur, telling him "now you can say that you possess, a true Corot." These are facts well known to persons who have lived in studios.

(2) *Vide* further on; the text of this Book of Kings is remarkably correct, unlike those copied in the 14th and 15th centuries, of which the text is always extremely defective; unfortunately only those pages of the manuscript which contain illustrations have been preserved; for Firdausî's Book of Kings has an exceptional importance from the point of view of the literary history of Persia, infinitely more than that of Nizāmî or of S'adî.

A Book of Kings which belonged to M. Demotte was not at all executed at Samarkand or Bukhārā,

The Persian paintings of this remote epoch are extremely rare and only a few isolated examples are known; many of the books containing them disappeared at the time of the Mongol invasion, and many that escaped the fury of Chingiz were lost in the course of the hundred and eighty years subsequent to the invasion; it is certain that the conquest of Iran by Chingiz had nearly destroyed the entire Mussulman literature(3) and that the books, composed in Persia under the reign of Mongol princes, had nearly perished by reason of the troubles that followed the death of Sultan Abū Sa'īd Bāhādur Khān (1335) and continued till the beginning of the 15th century. It was then that the Timuride princes took into their own hands the destiny of Iran and provoked a literary and artistic renaissance, during which a careful search was made for manuscripts and their texts copied and diffused so well that they saved Persian literature and art from entire destruction.

But we only know a few rare examples of this Persian painting of the end of the 12th and the opening years of the 13th century.(4) I have collected cases of their mention in several places and the list is not very long, since it reduces itself to a Book of Kings copied in 1206; a manuscript of the history of Tabari in Persian, which belonged to Mr. Kevorkian and bears no date and seems to me to be posterior by several years, some fragments of the Persian translation of the Fables of Bidpai which was bequeathed in 1916 by Marteau to the Bibliothèque Nationale, and which on philological and artistic grounds I attribute to the middle of the 12th century.(5)

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as M. Migeon has rashly asserted (Le Musée du Louvre Depuis, 1914, Paris, Demotte, 1920, tome II, notice de la planche 62), when he writes that the paintings give some idea of the talent of the artists of the school of Transoxiana at the end of the 13th and the commencement of the 14th century; in reality, this Book of Kings was illustrated at the other extremity of Iran, at Tabriz, towards 1310, as is indicated by the nice peculiarities of its handwriting and orthography (Notices et Extraits des Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale, 1923, pages 15—18; les Enluminures des Manuscrits Orientaux, Paris, 1926, Plate 98 and page 139).

It is absolutely a mistake to suppose that Central Asia was the source of Chinese and occidental civilization; nothing, in Chinese, Persian or Arabic texts, authorizes such a hypothesis, which belongs to the domain of mystic imagination, as in the case of Mrs. Annie Besant, who *saw* in the depths of the soil of Central Asia the buried ruins of a gigantic civilization which must have preceded ours; we should remark that the books which were really illuminated at Samarkand, a curious example of which is found in the collection of Mr. Chester Beatty, are often adorned with strange and barbarous decorations, when their authors wished to do something indicative of their own personality which only serves to exhibit their lack of taste; this is also noticeable in a manuscript which belonged to Mr. Sambon, and in which an artist of Bukhara, who has painted out of his imagination a rose-window, which is a veritable horror; the Transoxian people achieved something acceptable only when they slavishly copied the Persian model.

(3) What is showing the observation of lists of historical, scientific and literary books, written in Arabic or Persian which are cited as their sources by authors who lived before the Mongol epoch and who made use of these books to compose theirs; one would search in vain for these books whose titles alone are well known; their text would manifestly throw much light on the history of the civilization of the Khalifat.

(4) A few more examples of Mesopotamian art between 1180 and 1237 are known to us and I have collected a certain number of the most characteristic specimens which are found in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris in les Enluminures, Paris, 1926, Plates 2—13 and in 'Mussulman Painting,' London, 1929, Plates 3—9, 12—31. It is incontestable that the Mongols pillaged as much in Arab-Irak as in Persian-Irak, but their devastations stopped before the frontier of the empire of the Mamluk Sultans of Cairo, who put a stop to their onrush; unfortunately the Mussulmans of Syria and Egypt paid no attention to these works of art which have almost all perished (*see* particularly les Enluminures des Manuscrits Orientaux, Paris, 1926, Plates 1 and 2 in the introduction; les Peintures de la Collection Pozzi; in the Bulletin de la Société Française de Reproduction de Manuscrits a Peintures, Paris, 1928, pages 7 and 8, Plates 1 and 2; 'Mussulman Painting,' London, 1929, Plates 10 and 11).

(5) This date has been challenged as regards paintings from the beginning of the 15th century, which M. Arménag Beg Sakisian (La Miniature Persane du XII ae XVIIu Siécle, Plates 3—10 and pages 11—14) makes out to be pre-Mongol works, and regarding which I am going to speak; I have replied to these objections in the Bulletin de la Société Française de Reproduction de Manuscrits a Peintures, Paris, 1926, page 20, by emphasizing my reasons; I may have been mistaken but I would like to say that I have no interest in the affairs

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM A SHAH-NAMA

Ghose Collection

The leaves of the Book of Kings of which 40 belong to Mr. Ajit Ghose of Calcutta and 7 to Mr. Chester Beatty of London, permit of our making the list a bit longer by adding 47 paintings which go back to the end of the sovereignty of the Sadjukide princes in Asia Minor, in the country of Rum, following the Mussulman terminology, in the empire of the Saljoukides of Asia Minor, at Iconium, at Cesarea of Cappadocia, or at Siwas, in the provinces which during thirteen hundred years followed the Greco-Roman civilization, and where the Christians, under the supremacy of Saljoukide Turks, continued the traditions of the Byzantine civilization; the Greek tradition was kept up, in this land, as we know from the famous traveller Ibn Batuta, who, at the commencement of the 14th century, asserts unequivocally that the people who wove those splendid Latakiyya cloths were Greek women.(6)

It is not that certain amateurs have not endeavoured to trace back to this remote period paintings infinitely more recent and of no value: M. Martin, in his "Miniature Painting and Painters," has attributed to the end of the 12th century, towards 1180, illustration of a treatise on Automata by Al-Jazari of which an illuminated manuscript is preserved in the library of St. Sophia in Constantinople, and which bears in all letters the date of 1354,(7) it is at an epoch close to the beginning of the 13th century that M. Sakisian places several paintings which illustrate the pages of a manuscript of the Persian translation of the Fables of Bidpai, which belongs manifestly to the beginning of the 15th century; so that M. Sakisian places them 2 centuries earlier than their date.(8)

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being neither a merchant like M. Martin, nor a collector like M. Sakisian; a collector, invariably, is tempted to over-estimate the items of his collection, or those which he has discovered, as in the case with M. Sakisian, in collections that none before him had been able to see.

(6) As M. Riefstahl has admitted it by going straight to see the colophon of the manuscript from which these paintings were torn away in 1902, the date at which they were brought to me in Paris.

(7) I assigned this date of 1354 to these paintings without seeing the colophon of the book from which they were detached as 1902 (Revue Archéologique, 1907); this date has been vehemently contested by M. Martin and by all Orientalists, because they wanted to make out these paintings to be the origins of Mussulman painting; the criticisms have been collected by M. Coomaraswamy, Director of the Museum of Boston, in a Memoir entitled "The Treatise of Al-Jazari on Automata" (Museum of Fine Arts, 1924), which shows conclusively that I did not know what I was saying in referring these paintings to the year 1354; while they are manifestly from the year 1206 (Les Peintures de la Collection Pozzi, in the Bulletin de la Société Française de Reproduction de Manuscrits a Peintures, Paris, 1928, pages 8—11); in a publication of the year 1929 in which he has reproduced the Persian and Arab paintings of the Museum of Boston, M. Coomaraswamy has been obliged to admit that he was mistaken by a century and a half.

(8) In the *Gazette des Beaux Arts* of 1923 and in his "la Miniature Persane du XIIe au XVIIe Siècle," Plates 3—10 and pages 11—14) which he has published in 1929, I have drawn M. Arménag Beg Sakisian's attention to the fact that the characteristics of the technique of these paintings are absolutely different from those from the end of the 12th and the beginning of the 13th century, that their drawing and manner are much finer and show greater care than the style of paintings of a prior date at the Mongol invasion, and what is yet more decisive, that those illustrations of the collection of the Fables of Bidpai are replicas, obvious imitations of pictures which illustrate a copy of the collection of fables, dated 1280, which belongs to the collections of the Bibliothèque Nationale; that the fashions of the persons who appear in them are those of Timuride paintings of 1380—1400, and not, in any way, those of the Persian paintings of the end of the Saljoukide reign: that the graphic characters of his handwriting have nothing in common with the *naskhi* of the Books of Kings and of the History of Tabari of the beginning of the 13th century; that these paintings should be referred to some period near about 1400, too far off to be pre-Mongol works (Bulletin de la Société Française de Reproduction de Manuscrits a Peintures, Paris, 1926, page 19); but these arguments are of no value when people are guided by preconceived opinions. The Goncourt have said somewhere that nothing can hear more silly things than a picture in a Museum. Before speaking of painting and, above all, of the influence of a process on the manner of another country, it would be a good thing to know the technique of painting, and to be able at least to copy a picture; a person who will take the trouble to copy successively a Persian painting and then a Chinese one will not be slow to perceive the absolute differences which separate their palette and manner of drawing.

One would search in vain in the small pictures of Mr. Ajit Ghose's Book of Kings for the influence of Chinese technique. Nothing in the world differs more than the manner, the design or pallette of the pictures of about the year 1200, from the paintings executed in the Celestial Empire at the end of the Sung dynasty; that demonstrates sufficiently the coarseness and heaviness of Persian drawing as distinguished from the fineness and extreme lightness of Chinese works, the sobriety of the pallette of the artists of the Celestial Empire, which reduces itself to one or two colours in a very sombre tonality, while that of the Iranian painters is complicated and often vulgar.

Indeed there exists a very vague and superficial resemblance between the works of the Persian school of painting and those of the Chinese artists; or, rather, persons who know neither one nor the other of these techniques, particularly those who have never seen Chinese paintings, strongly maintain the influence of the technique of the Celestial Empire on that of Iran; this apparent resemblance is due to the fact that the characters that figure in the Persian paintings of the 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th centuries, during the reigns of the Saljoukides, Mongols and Timurides, are Turks and Tonghuzes, who resemble the Chinese of the North to whom they are related, and who, moreover, had brought into Iran fashions and military equipment, which they had borrowed, while living in Central Asia, from the Chinese.(9) Thus the knights who figure in the paintings of Mr. Ajit Ghose's Book of Kings put on cuirasses formed of metallic scales imbricated like those of fish, which strongly resemble the armour of the Japanese warriors; this is easily explained by the fact that the Japanese, like the Turks and the Mongols, borrowed their fashions from the Chinese, during the period of the T'ang dynasty.

This is proved by the fact that we would search in vain for these types and fashions of the Chinese Empire in the paintings which were executed at the end of the 12th century and the beginning of the 13th,(10)

What would one say of a person who pretended that he was studying the origins of the infinitesimal calculus in Archimedes without knowing anything else than the four fundamental rules of arithmetic, of another who should wish to study the progress of therapeutics between Hippocrates and Galen without being a doctor. In reality China constitutes a vague and convenient geographical expression, by means of which it is possible to localize entities about which one knows nothing. In this question China plays a rôle exactly similar to the rôle that was played, about 50 years ago, in the linguistic science by the family of languages called the Turanian; the linguists included in that group all the idioms of the ancient world, from Japanese to Basque, that was neither Indo-European nor Semitic; in this same way in Persia, if an Arab coin of the 8th or 9th century, bearing a legend written in the Kufic character which is now quite unknown in the Mussulman countries is now shown to a man, even an educated man, this man without hesitation considers it to be a Chinese coin.

(9) For which reason we should, of course, guard against establishing any connection whatsoever between the painting of the Japanese islands and that of Persia. Works of art tending towards perfection, towards absolute imitation, integral reproduction of nature, have inevitably common characteristics; they resemble each other to the extent that they cannot be distinguished from each other, if they attain ideal perfection which consists in the absolute reproduction of nature; in this sense it is sometimes very difficult to discriminate the characteristics of a work of the Renaissance of a work from classical antiquity, for the simple reason that their authors very closely approached one single type; one should not fall into the amusing error of a friend of mine, a very distinguished Japanese professor and eminent Indianist, who pointed out to myself the resemblances which he noticed between the productions of the school of Bihzad, at Herat, in Persia, in 1480, and the Japanese paintings copies from pictures of the 12th century; in all these matters of resemblances and similitudes, one should bear in mind historical possibilities and not be misled by deceitful resemblances.

(10) I am the first to explain according to the prose preface of the Books of Kings that in the 10th century, at Bukhara, under the reign of Samanide, King of Transoxiana, Nasr, son of Ahmad, Chinese artists who had accompanied to Bukhara an embassy sent by the Son of Heaven illuminated a copy of the Fables of Bidpai (Les Peintures des Manuscrits, 1914, pages 191—193; Notices et Extraits, 1923, pages 218—221; les Enluminures des Manuscrits, 1926, pages 10—15; 'Mussulman Painting,' London, 1929, page 45); I have shown that these works conceived in the Chinese technique of the end of the T'ang period, have only had most ephemeral existence in

Fig. 2

Fig. 3

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM A SHĀH-NĀMĀ, GHOSE COLLECTION

in the Asiatic provinces of the Abbaside Khalif at the very time when Mr. Ajit Ghose's Book of Kings was illuminated as well as the other Persian books mentioned by me at the beginning of this article.

The Turks, at this time, were not the masters of Baghdad, Kufa and Basra, and no Chinese custom introduced itself into a country whose people followed the Islamic civilization of the early times, and whose ideal was to preserve in its integrity the tradition of the 7th and 8th centuries. It is true there was at Baghdad a Turkish guard who surrounded the Khalif on his tottering throne; but their number was too small to influence the Arabs of Irak.

Transoxiana, and that from words of the prose preface to the Book of Kings, we must manifestly infer that there was only one copy of these illuminated tales of Bidpai. I maintain that these paintings never went over the Oxus and were never known in Persia and, consequently, that in the Persian technique one would search in vain for any reminiscence of motifs of the 10th century; these Chinese illuminators of the Fables of Bidpai, following the Celestial technique of the 9th and 10th centuries, executed designs of great distinction, like marks of burin on a copper plaque, relieved by a little colour, in a unique shade, very light, the length of the contour of the drawing, of this painting without colour, in a manner completely opposed to that of the paintings of Mr. Ajit Ghose's Book of Kings and of other books contemporaneous with the same; the design of these paintings is clumsy, completely the reverse of that of the Chinese; they abound in extravagant tones, in all the nuances, with background of gold which the Chinese artists abominate, and which they rationally regard as a manifestation of the pride of the upstart and of vulgar people, exactly in the same sense as the Greek and Roman painters of the classical period. This technique of the background of gold came into vogue at the end of the 4th century, at an epoch when the civilization of Rome was in full decadence, when the taste inherited from antiquity had become corrupted; the Christian artists believed they were enhancing the value and effectiveness of the Roman works of art which they adapted to their needs by introducing into them this sumptuous background of gold which they regarded as the symbol of the riches and majesty of their faith; it was a heresy that the Romans of the Republican or Imperial periods would never have committed. M. Arménag Beg Sakisian categorically affirms that I have wrongly derived the survival of some of these Chinese motifs of the 10th century in the Persian paintings which he attributes to the beginning of the 13th century, and which date in reality from the commencement of the 15th or from the end of the 14th; but in admitting in its paintings the existence of Chinese motifs, even admitting that they go back to the year 1200, which is yet to be proved, that would be quite natural, since the Turks who had subjugated Iran had brought from Central Asia certain elements of Chinese culture; but I insist on this fact that from the point of view of technique there is no resemblance or similarity between a coloured Chinese drawing and a Persian painting, that no person knowing drawing and painting would have the slightest hesitation for a moment on this subject, that the opinion of other persons does not count and only serves to burden science with vexatious theories, as if the teacher of a class of small girls wished to discuss integral calculus. To find again in Persian art works which are allied to those drawings executed very far from Persia, at Bukhara, in Transoxiana, in the 10th century, of which besides we know nothing else than their mention in the preface of the Book of Kings, we should go back to the commencement of the 15th century when we find, at Samarkand, as also in Transoxiana, illustrations of an Arabic book, which were executed by a Persian in imitation of Chinese paintings (Les Peintures des Manuscrits, 1914, Plates 30—33, les Enluminures des Manuscrits, 1926, Plates 38—40; 'Mussulman Painting,' London, 1929, Plates 88—93). But this fact is explicable without any mystery; the technique of the illustrations in the Fables of Bidpai of the 10th century has not been transmitted to the beautiful illustrations of a treatise on astronomy illuminated for Ulug Beg, grandson of Tamerlane, sovereign of Transoxiana; the artist who worked for this prince, copied in fact Chinese paintings of the end of the Yuan or beginning of the Ming period, brought to Samarkand to flatter the glow of the Timuride princes who are passionately fond of Chinese objects, so fond of them that Ulug Beg caused to be transported from China by pieces a porcelain palace which was rebuilt in the suburbs of Samarkand; the influence of Chinese art on that of Persian was of the same nature, as I have explained at length.

This theory is the offspring of the brain of those persons who will not admit the influence of Byzantine art on Mussulman painting, for whose origin they would prefer to search among the Mauris or the Matabeles rather than in the Byzantine studios of Syria; has not a Japanese critic vehemently denied, against all evidence, the influence of Greek art (Hellenistic art) on the art of Gandhara? Historians of art do anything possible and impossible to prove that Byzantine painting and Roman architecture came into existence under the influence of the Orient,

The largest number of these paintings are put in a background of gold whose origin should be sought for in the well known technique of the illustration of Greek Christian books; the background of gold is a favourite trait of the Christian art at Rome, Ravenna and Constantinople. The illuminators of the Book of Kings who worked at the frontiers of the Greek Empire imitated Byzantine technique, the background of gold, which is a characteristic of illuminated Christian books under the direction of the studios of Constantinople; at this period of the end of the 12th century and the opening years of the 13th prior to the Mongol invasion the technique of the background of gold is absolutely unknown to the Mussulman illuminators, throughout the length and breadth of the empire of the Khalif, in Persia as well as in Mesopotamia; so that we should regard the background of gold in Mr. Ajit Ghose's Book of Kings only as an isolated imitation of the Byzantine process, which is explicable solely by the geographical conditions under which it was executed.(11) These backgrounds of gold are not connected with those which appeared in the manner of the Persian manuscript at Tauris, towards 1310, in the illuminations of a Book of Kings of gigantic format, which, in this case, are not borrowed from the Greek ateliers, but in reality from the illustrations of Latin and Greek books which were imported into Iran during the Mongol period.

The technique of the background of gold was besides an ancient tradition in Persia. The great poet Bohtori, describing in Arabic verse the ruins of the palace of Khusrau Parviz at Ctesiphon, near Baghdad (7th century), says that the frescoes had a yellow background, which imitated in a mediocre and economical way the backgrounds of gold of the mosaics and paintings of the Roman Empire.(12)

The technique of these paintings of Mr. Ghose's Book of Kings, as of the three other Persian books which go back to this epoch, is the evolution of that of the paintings executed in Mesopotamia in the dominions of the Abbasside Khalif of Baghdad with this essential difference that the Mesopotamian paintings which adorn the Arab manuscripts have never any background of gold; obviously, the background of gold seemed

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specially of Armenia, which, from every point of view, literary, artistic and architectural, has copied Byzantium; it is known that from all points of view Asia lived on that which Byzantium brought to her; this proposition has been particularly established by a learned scholar, M. Diehl, in his book "Byzance, Grandeur et Décadence, Paris, 1919; les Services Rendus par Byzance, livre IV), who nevertheless is not opposed to the theory of a certain extent of influence of the Orient on Byzantium; if this influence has exercised itself, it must have been altogether on points of very secondary importance. It is quite certain that Roman decoration from the 5th to the 10th century, in France, with its peacocks, elephants armed with cuirasses, above all with their turrets on which archers are stationed, is not of French origin, since these animals do not live there; it comes from Byzantium, whence it was borrowed from Persia, where these elephants armed with cuirasses served as tanks, as we know from the well known passage of Maccabeus (Book I, Chapter VI, 43—46) where Eliazar, son of Saura, glides under the belly of an cataphract elephant of King Antiochus, to plunge his sword into a part of his body not protected by iron armour and perishes, crushed by the fall of the monster; the Roman artists knew so little the real nature of the elephant that some of them, not understanding what its proboscis is, replaced it by a cord, which in their opinion served to lead these animals by pulling them by the nose.

(11) Continued relations subsisted between the Saljoukide monarchy and the Greek empire of Asia; in 1261, Izz-ad-Din Kai-Kaous, who reigned over the dominions of the Saljouks of Rum conjointly with his brother Rukn-ad-Din Kilidj Arslan, was obliged to give up his entire power to this last, and to quit the country; he did not even think of going to Persia; he departed for Nicaea, whither he went to seek for a refuge in the Court of the Greek emperor, Michael Paleologus, whose daughter had been in the meantime married to the Mongol prince Abagha; the mother of Izz-ad-Din Kai-Kaous was a Christian, probably a Greek, and she had brought up her son, if not in the religion, at least in the customs and manners of the Christians, which were much more refined than the Mussulman customs; Nicephorus Gregoras, who has recorded this astonishing adventure, says that Izz-ad-Din behaved himself in the Court of the Greek emperor with the refinement of a nobleman of Nicæa, a thing which was manifestly a singular contrast to the manners of the Saljoukide noblemen when political affairs brought them to the Greek Court.

(12) Les Peintures des Manuscrits Orientaux, page 107.

Fig. 4

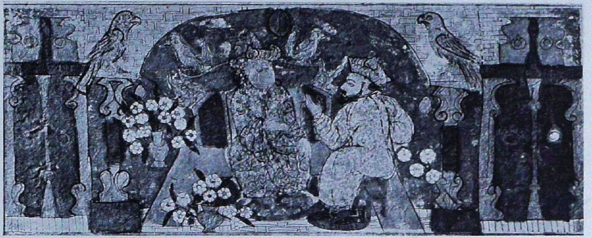

Fig 5

Fig. 6

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM A SHĀH-NĀMĀ, GHOSE COLLECTION

to be a method too grand and too complicated to the practitioners who worked in the dominions of the Commander of the Faithful.

The design of these paintings, as I have already said, is of a summary nature, but there is no lack of skill and firmness; at all epochs the Persian artists might have executed a more careful design, but they did not devote sufficient attention to it and reduced it to a sketch, since it was destined to disappear under the most vivid colours, while the technicians of the Celestial Empire knew that in their works there would be no colours to conceal the defects of their design. The pallette of these little illustrations is something special, and it differs sensibly from that which was in use in Persia, during subsequent epochs. It is manifestly a simplification of the pallette of the artists who worked under the influence and the direction of Byzantium in the provinces of the Greek empire of Nicæa, and in the regions of Syria. The technique of the paintings of the Mongol epoch towards 1310 and above the process of the Timuride illuminators in the 15th century are different and much more complicated, much richer, whether this complication is due to a natural evolution of painting in Persia, or whether, which is more probable, we are to see here the influence of the Tuscan painters, of the Italian Primitives. Their colouring is extremely archaic and simple; yellow is unknown to it and white is little employed: the essential elements are vermilion and black, in the same way as two brown colours, of which one suits the red and the other the green leaves of trees. It is probable that this exclusion of the colour yellow corresponds to the absolute suppression of gold which abounds in the illustrations of Greek books. The technique of these paintings is the natural evolution of the manner of the pictures executed in Mesopotamia under the reign of the Abbasside Khalifs: personages purely Arabic are there replaced by Persians dressed in the Iranian manner which differed only a little from the Baghdad fashions. The essential difference between these little paintings and the illuminations of Arab manuscripts consists in the equipment and accoutrement of the warriors, who, as I have explained above, put an armour with imbricated scales, helmets with large plaques to protect the ears, which the Turks had borrowed from the arms of the Celestial Empire, and which give them a false Samurai appearance. Such was manifestly the manner in which the officers of the King of Persia equipped themselves, in a style altogether different from that of the officers of the Khalif, who, without any doubt, were dressed and equipped like the French chevaliers; indeed, French fashions of the 14th or 15th century with a slight change were adopted by the Mussulman Knights, who, at the end of the 16th century appear in the beautiful paintings in the Memoirs of Babur Padishah, and in the "History of the Mongols," by Rashid-ad-Din, which were illuminated for the Emperor Akbar; the Chinese military fashions in dress, the cuirasses with scales imbricated for men as well as for horses, disappeared in Persia towards 1260, to be replaced by the more convenient arms of the West; we notice them already in the paintings executed at Tauris, about 1310, and certainly they were common in Iran during the 15th century at the Timur epoch. But at the end of the 11th century, at the time of the first crusade, when the armies of Godfrey of Bouillon clashed against the troops of the Saljoukide Sultan who defended Asia Minor against the Christians, it was an army of Samurais who charged the French Knights, who put on arms inlaid with gold. This manner of the paintings of this Book of Kings, as well as those of the other manuscripts which I had discussed together, is essentially that of the decoration of the ceramics of Rhages conceived in a spirit quite different from the ornamentation and illustration of more recent manuscripts that an inconsiderate critic wishes to refer back to the year 120[illegible]. The importance of these little paintings does not consist merely in their undoubted antiquity, and in their style which is absolutely different from that of the pictures of the 14th and 15th centuries; the details of the scenes represented there differ essentially from the illustrations of the Books of Kings of the Timurid epoch, still more from those of the Safavid period; the examination of a Khamsah of Nizâmî, of another of Khosru

Dilhlavi, and the collection of Mr. Chester Beatty, which were illuminated during the reign of Shāh Rūkh Bahadur, son of Tamerlane, has led me to this conclusion that the Persian iconographic canon was entirely modified and reconstructed, under the reign of the Timurides, about 1440. At this same period, and clearly under the same influences, the technique of painting, the composition of scenes, the manner in which the characters appearing there are arranged, tend to move towards the style which is going to become that of Bihzād, at Herat, about 1475—1525, and which will be slavishly imitated by all the painters of manuscripts in Persia, till the moment when this vogue disappears.

Not only the composition and arrangement of the scenes, the manner in which they are treated in the pictures of Mr. Ghose's Book of Kings are altogether different from the Bihzādian canons at Herat, towards 1480, but it is not at all the same subjects which are represented at the time of the Saljuks, towards 1200, in the country of Rum, and at Herat, about 1500, during the reign of the Timurides; I do not think that we should suppose in this fact an innovation, an invention, of Bihzād, or of the Bihzādian School, but much more simply a choice altogether different in the ensemble of the Persian iconographic canon; this is precisely what happened in the Christian world during the middle ages, at Byzantium, for the pictures of the Bibles and Gospels; in fact the paintings which illustrated the most beautiful manuscripts of the Old and New Testaments represent only a very small part of the Christian iconography.

The catalogue of the inventions of this iconography forms a very important collection of clichés of stereotyped designs, of which the list has been fortunately preserved for us by a Greek monk of the 12th century, though we never find in any manuscript a collection of all the paintings, of which he has left us a very curious description, which represent the ensemble of what they could do and not of what they were doing.

The forty paintings in the possession of Mr. Ajit Ghose represent amongst others the following scenes from the Book of Kings:—

(Fig. 1). Minutchini, Prince of Persia, puts to flight the army of Tur, son of King Faridun, who had killed his brother Irij, heir to the crown of Iran. (Colour Plate.)

(Fig. 2). The combat of Rustam with the Turkish Knight Chingish, of the army of Afrasiab, King of Turan; Rustam seizes the horse of Chingish by the tail, unhorses him and throws him on the ground.

(Fig. 3). Faramurz, son of Rustam, brings before his father, Surkha, the son of Afrasiab, in chains, that he might cut off his head, by way of reprisal for the death of Syavush, crown-prince of Persia.

(Fig. 4). An episode of the combat of Rustam and Isfandiar, son of Gushtasp, King of Persia; Rustam, wounded with an arrow by the hero Isfandiar, alights from his horse and prepares to climb a hill; his horse Rakhsh, likewise wounded, crosses the river near which the combat has taken place.

(Fig. 5). Alexander the Great talking with Kaidafa, Queen of Barda, in the West, in the palace of the princess.

(Fig. 6). Alexander the Great conversing with the miraculous birds, on the summit of a high mountain, in the regions of the West, before constructing the wall of Gog and Magog, in the borders of China.

(Fig. 7). Ardawan Arsakid, King of Persia, on horseback, with his sons and Ardashir, son of Babak; Ardashir has killed a wild ass, and one of the sons of King Ardawan contests the hicky stroke with him, which provokes the anger of the Persian sovereign.

(Fig. 8). Bahram Gur, King of Persia, of the Sassanide dynasty, kills a dragon in whose womb he finds a young man whom the monster had devoured.

(Fig. 9). The paladin Rustam kills a Turanian Knight; the Knight's eyes have been retouched very clumsily following the current Persian practice.

(Fig. 10). Bahram Gur drives away the wild asses.

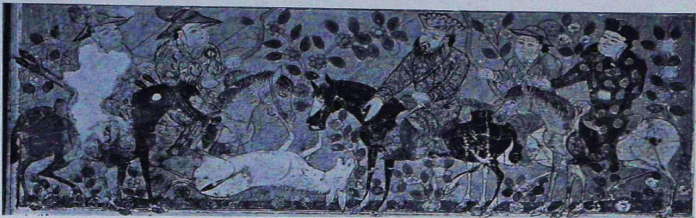

Fig. 7

Fig. 8

Fig. 9

Fig. 10

Fig 1. Fresco of Amitabha, Horuiji, Japan
(8th Century)

THE LIVING TRADITION OF AJANTA

III.—THE LIVING TRADITION OF AJANTA.

By KENNETH SAUNDERS.

AJANTA is a cradle of Asiatic art. Japanese visitors have often exclaimed on the kinship between its great frescoes and those of Horiuji. Japanese artists have made some of the best copies of them, almost entirely destroyed, alas, in the great earthquake; but I have seen some of them, and they seem to me to have caught the very spirit of Ajanta.

Scholars have now the materials for working out the long journey of this art eastwards to the grottoes of Tun Huang and Miran in Chinese Turkestan, and on to Horiuji, and southwards to Sigiri Rock in Ceylon. I have often climbed to that wonderful gallery, and gazed in amazement at its procession of princesses and handmaidens still glowing with splendid colour, and alive with the spirit of the Indian renaissance.

That this art is purely Indian, and that the Indian exponents of Buddhism were its "carriers" is clear; but it is also clear that it developed in each new environment. Horiuji shows some of these developments; it is a museum of Asiatic culture where the influence of T'ang China and Turkestan can be seen moulding the spirit of Guptan Ajanta.

That this is a living spirit to-day the artists of Bengal have shown. Not only have they repeatedly copied its masterpieces, they have also learned from them much of their technique, have drunk deep of their joy in the beauty of Indian womanhood and of the great beasts of the jungle. For Buddhism was an awakening of the Indian spirit and while it was in part world-denying, it was also so filled with joy that it could not but rejoice in the beauty of the world. Even the fair forms of women, a "snare of Māra" for the monk, were to the artist a part of the splendour of his native land. These lovely forms but thinly veiled are perhaps the first impression which the visitor receives. And the next is that of great herds of elephants and groups of inimitable monkeys which suggest that these monks knew alike the life of the city and of the country-side. More and more as these great works of art are made accessible and as the tide of Indian nationalism mounts, will the lover of Mother India flock to this lovely valley: and the visit will be an imperishable memory.

Here, some 300 miles from Bombay, in a great semi-circular valley a little stream "murmurs its perpetual plain-song"—a fitting place to meditate. Here some 2000 years ago a little group of monks made their first home. The frescoes of caves IX and X seem to belong to about the first century B.C., and here for perhaps a thousand years their communal life went on, until Ajanta was a mighty abbey, and the simple caves had developed into great pillared cathedrals or chaityas and rows of monastic cells or Vihāras. Their walls glow after all these centuries of use, and of neglect, with the rich tones and the rhythmic processions of an art already highly developed by the Guptan age. Here one may reconstruct the splendour of these early monastic haunts of Buddhism, and may still drink deep of their peace.

A delightful pilgrimage it is to visit the Buddha's birthplace, to pass on to Patna, the old capital of the Mauryas, to the venerable Bo-tree and the Deer Park, and so to become attuned and prepared to understand the great things of Ajanta, and of Sanchi on its lovely hilltop, a few hours' journey away. This was the pilgrimage of the great Buddhist rulers and we find as early, at any rate, as Aśoka, that the symbols of these great scenes in the life of the Buddha were the chosen motifs of the earliest art. How well they suited the genius of India! The elephant, always her best beloved of animals, came to symbolize the dream of the Buddha's mother, the great humped bull stood for the month of May when Taurus is in the ascendant, and the lion was the symbol of the Buddha's first preaching. These were stamped on tokens for the faithful, and they reappear on the primitive sculptures of Barhut and the highly wrought pillars of the Aśokan age.

At Ajanta the symbolism remains, but it has largely given place to realistic pictures

of these events, as seen in our illustrations of the Birth and Temptation of Śākyamuni.

The artists believed, too, that for many æons he had been born in other forms and these supplied them with many a delightful theme. Here were grand opportunities for painting herds of elephants or apes sporting in the jungle; and a spice of quaint humour was added to their art as these familiar forms were endowed with human reason and emotion. Fa Hian, who visited India and Ceylon in the 5th century, the age of the great Guptas, of Kālidāsa and Kumārajîva, tells how popular pageants dramatized these admirable folk-tales, and his contemporary, the commentator Buddhaghoṣa, sums up their Buddhist interpretation: "More than the ocean is the blood he poured out, more than the stars are the eyes he sacrificed."

From this wealth of material, there are 550 Jātakas and several versions of the Legend of Śākyamuni, the artists chose some incidents which recur again and again like a solemn fugue, because they best serve to show his great companion, or because they form an effective contrast between his early life as a prince, and his life of sacrifice as the wandering recluse who became the Buddha.

Let us accompany the Curator of the caves, Mr. Syed Ahmad, himself an able artist. In the early morning he will guide us to these frescoes, which he has studied so lovingly and knows in such intimate detail. First we visit Cave XVI. Here is a fine series of scenes from the Buddha-legend as set forth in the Lalita Vistara, from the Birth of Śākyamuni to his Enlightenment. In our reproduction of the former the technique of the artist is clearly revealed. On a carefully prepared surface of plaster he outlined his subject with a thin flowing line of red, and then filled in the outline with glowing colour. It is amazing how with one stroke of the brush he would make the contours of some lovely female form, or express in the turn of a hand or in the arch of an eyebrow some subtle emotion. Almost all the incidents of the legendary life of the Buddha are depicted at Ajanta, and the artist had clearly entered deeply into that wonderful story.

Here too are certain scenes from the Jātakas, which occur again and again in Indian art. The artist rejoiced in such stories as that of Chaddanta, the noble elephant, yielding up his tusks to the vengeful queen, who had him treacherously shot, but could not ruffle his equanimity nor soil his magnanimous spirit. Was he not to be reborn as the Buddha? Such is the didactic purpose of the fresco; but who can doubt that the artist revelled also in these great herds of elephants, a veritable pageant of the jungle? If these are "memory pictures" as Dr. Coomaraswamy maintains,(1) they are also the work of very keen observers of Nature.

That is a combination which is of the essence of Oriental, as of all great art. The artist is to know the "skeleton," say the canons of Chinese art, in order that he may "express the spirit which informs the rhythm of Nature." And early Indian canons also insist that behind the physical world of form, which must be observed, lies a more real meaning, which must be interpreted.

The poet works in no other way. He refuses with Wordsworth "to make an inventory of Nature": but goes forth "in meditative mood," observes carefully, and at a later day embodies his memory-pictures, presenting us with the soul of what he has seen.

The Buddhist birth-stories, which deal so largely with animals and plants, with the jungle as well as with the village, gave full scope to the artist for interpretation as well as for observation. They and the pictures which illustrate them are proof that the Indian loved nature, even while he used it for didactic purposes.

A favourite with the artists of India is the story of the Bodhisattva when he was King of the Apes. The King of Benares hearing of a mango-tree whose fruits had floated to his city, sought it out, and found the monkeys in possession. Manlike he began to shoot until their King, forming a bridge, let his tribe escape over his own body to safety. The villain of the Buddha-legend, afterwards to be reborn as the traitor Devadatta, leaps on his back and breaks it, and the Ape King, with his dying breath, teaches the King of

(1) Introduction to Indian Art, pages 20—22.

Fig 2. The Birth of Sakyamuni

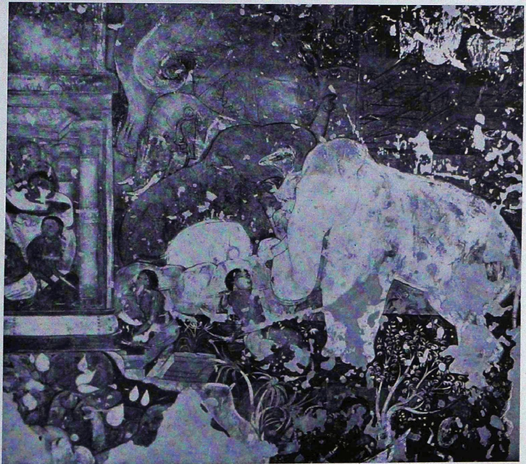

Fig 3. The Elephant Chaddanta

Fig 4. Padmapani

Fig 5. The Temptation of the Buddha

THE LIVING TRADITION OF AJANTA

Men, the great Buddhist principle of ahimsā, so vividly realized in the life and teachings of India's greatest living son. "It is more kingly," he urges, "to save life than to destroy it." As Mr. Gāndhī would say, "If there is blood shed, let it be our blood."

These lessons, together with that of liberality in giving, are made, if possible, more vivid by pictures like that of the Prince of the Śibis, who here and at Borobodur, is seen cutting off his own flesh as a ransom for the dove caught by a hungry hawk. Here is a counterpart of the Merchant of Venice, which is very Buddhist; and in the same cave we will find, as at Sānchi, the story of Vessantara, who refuses no sacrifice, even that of wife and child, in his search for salvation. By such stories the minds of multitudes have been prepared for the inner meaning of the Buddha-legend as it is told in such texts as the Introduction to the Jātakas, the Lalita Vistara and the Buddha-Charita; for these form the living core of Buddhism even to-day, and a visit to its ancient shrines is of more than archæological interest. Here the student will discover those things which make Buddhism a religion, as well as those missionary impulses which sent it out on its triumphant course through Asia.

As the setting sun casts its long level light into the recesses of Caves I and II, other scenes from the Buddha-legend are lit up. Here in Cave I is the Temptation by Māra and his demon armies. A vortex of horror about the calm central figure.

In Cave II are stories of the Infancy and Jātakas; but even more striking are the great figures of the Bodhisattva with the lotus, Padmapāni, and another, which help us to realize how noble a pantheon later Buddhism developed, and which critics have not hesitated to compare with the work of Michael Angelo and other Western masters.

"The frescoes of Ajanta have for Asia and the history of Asian art the same outstanding significance that the frescoes of Assisi, Siena, and Florence have for Europe and the History of European art. The whole course of art in Eastern Asia is bound up with the history of Buddhism in its successive phases; and the student of that art finds himself continually referring back to Ajanta as the one great surviving monument of the painting created by Buddhist faith and fervour in the land which gave birth to that religion."

So writes Mr. Laurence Binyon. And these great figures in Cave II are perhaps the crowning achievement of the Ajantan artists. They stand there as twin guardians of the shrine where the eternal Śakyamuni sits on his Diamond-Throne, and remind us that behind the elaborate developments of Buddhism is the historic Founder. Hard indeed it is to return to the Diamond-Throne and to recapture the Śākyamuni of history. Is he Rationalist or Divinity conscious that he had come to dethrone the gods of his people? Is he Philosopher or Yogî, Reformer or Conservator? Is he "the honoured Elder Brother" of the austere monks or "the God above the gods" of the masses? Is the view taken of him by the theologians of the Mahāyāna as the absolute dwelling in time a possible view?

These views are all to-day maintained by reputable scholars of East and West, and here we can only mention them so far as they affect the work of the Indian artist. He has, for the most part, seen in Śākyamuni the great Yogî, seated in rapt contemplation of his own inner consciousness. The glorious pageant of his princely life is only of interest because it culminates in the mystic trance beneath the bo-tree. The lovely forms of the Bodhisattvas are but sentinels of the ante-chapel, and they point the worshipper to the inner shrine where he sits in Samādhi, or rapt contemplation. Yet the masses will go a-worshipping; and these other figures attracted to themselves the reverence which should have gone wholly to the master: and he himself, partly in competition with these fair forms and with the popular gods of Hinduism came to be regarded as a living deity. Such is the meaning of the famous Lotus Scripture, the Saddharma Pundarika, whose influence on East Asian art has been profound. It is an apocalypse revealing the eternal Buddha and the universality of his Gospel.

Of the technique of these Ajanta paintings others better qualified have written. How they were done, how much they owe to foreign influence—these are questions which I

neither dare nor desire to discuss. What is to me significant is that they are essentially works of Indian art, and that in their spiritual realism, their love of nature and of fair human forms they prove that Indians who were also Buddhists belong to the great tradition which we have been apt to claim for the West. Buddhism was, in fact, a revolt against the other—wordly mysticism of the Upanishads—a claim that man's life, transient though it is, is real. As it developed it went on to claim that all are by nature Buddhas—they are real, not dreams. This is the essence of the Lotus Scripture, "All are my children.......all may attain to Buddhahood."

This emphasis on the reality and value of human life is one note of the Buddha's thought; but with it there went also the old Indian emphasis on the greater Reality over against this fleeting world, the One behind the Many. Man was only of value because in him the Eternal might be realized. And these two ideas of constant change over against eternal rest are the keynotes of oriental art. It seeks to sound both clearly, and to harmonize them. And so the pageant of Ajanta is best understood if we see in it this contrast—the eternal calm of the Enlightened as he sits beneath the bo-tree serene amidst the whirlpool of the. senses—the daughters of Māra dancing to allure him, or demon-armies attacking him, or the life of the careless world about him. This contrast is exquisitely brought out in a little Amarāvatî medallion.(2) Here we see on the one hand the elephant maddened by alcohol and the crowd which he is dispersing, and the women laughing at the lattices. Then the whirlpool ceases as the calm figure of the Buddha appears, and the elephant kneels in submission at his feet, and the crowd is hushed in awe. This from South India is very Ajantan and our illustration of the Dying Princess is a noble example of the realistic idealism of these early artists—alluring in its beauty and pathos. It shows that the artists were not merely interested in human life as a foil to the life of the Buddha. That life itself was human and all life might be brought to the same calm balance and perfection. I cannot agree with Sir John Marshall's dictum that "the beauty of man and man's intellect awaken no response in the Indian mind, bounded as it was by the immortal rather than the mortal, the infinite rather than the finite."(3) Sir John, to whom all lovers of India's art owe an incalculable debt, goes on to contrast Indian thought with the ethical and rational thought of Greece. Yet Śākyamuni was an Indian; in some ways the most Indian of Indians; and as he was a lover of the ethical and the rational, and as he pointed to the Middle Path between the life of the senses and the life of austerity, so Indians turned inevitably to to the ideal of a body which, like the mind, could become the servant of the higher life.

(2) *Vide* reproduction Fig. 32, René Grousset "Les Civilizations de L'Orient, tome II, l'Inde, Paris, 1930, p. 45.

(3) Cambridge History of India, Volume 1, page 649.

IV.—GARDEN-CARPETS.

By A. F. KENDRICK.

THE more the designs of old Oriental carpets are studied, the more the impression grows upon one that the chief underlying idea has been that of a garden. The prayer-carpet with its niche and hanging lamp is, of course, an exception; but there are relatively few others. At first sight the stiff geometrical forms to be found upon some classes of carpets seem to be as far removed from any idea of a garden as they could very well be. Nevertheless there is no doubt that many geometrical forms in art are ultimately derived from those of nature, and an effort to interpret such carpet-designs often points the way to a more or less convincing derivation from trees, flowers, birds or animals, or even from channels and pools of water. A couple of

Fig 6. The Young Prince and the Women

Fig 7. The Dying Princess

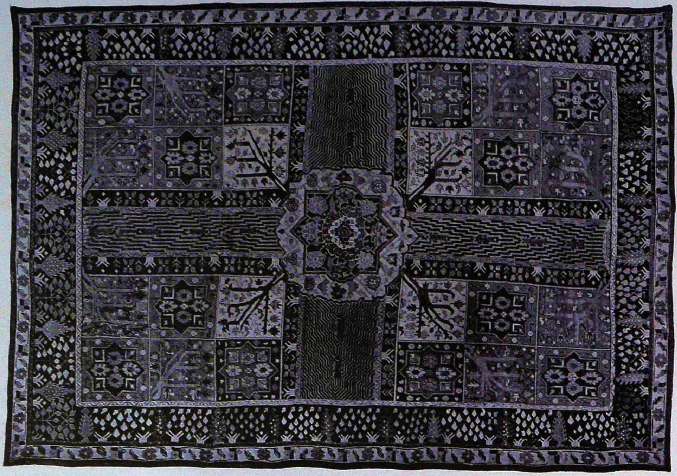

Fig 1. Carpet with Water-Channels, North-Western Persia ; 18th Century.
Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

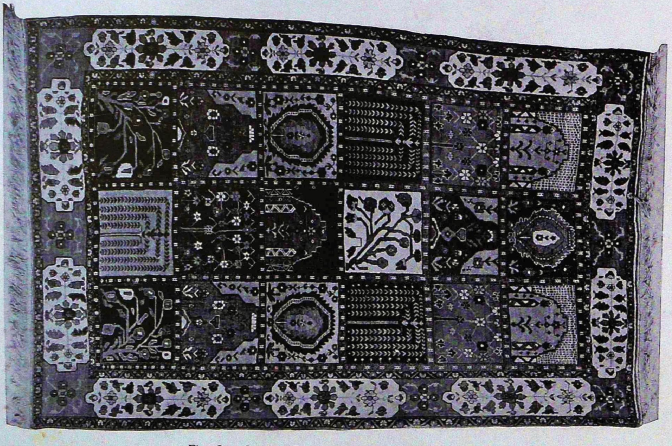

Fig 2. Garden-Carpet, South-Western Persia.
Victoria and Albert Meseum, London.

examples from carpets of the nomad class, both of comparatively modern date, may be chosen to exemplify this tendency. At a glance, the material does not promise an easy solution. The first (Fig. 4) is from a rug of Western Anatolia belonging to a type known in the market as Bergamo, because examples have come from the neighbourhood of that place, the ancient Pergamos. The octagonal panel was probably a circle originally, like many polygonal forms; but that has little bearing on the interpretation, for the pools of water in the true garden-carpets are varied in shape. Once the stiff central design is visualised as eight birds, facing one another in pairs and disposed in four groups round the centre of the space, the derivation seems certain. The straightness of the lower defining line in each pair suggests that the birds are swimming.

The second design (Fig. 5) is from a Caucasian carpet of the type known as "Kazak." The angular conventionalization of the ornament has here taken a further step, and it needs the help of the other to resolve this fantastic design into a pool with swimming ducks.

There is an account in early Arabian literature of a celebrated carpet older than any now known to exist, with the exception of the small fragments recently discovered by Sir Aurel Stein and other explorers in the desert region of Central Asia. The carpet had been made for Chosroes I, Sassanian ruler of Persia in the 6th century, to be placed in the White Palace at Ctesiphon on the Tigris. There it was found by the Arab conquerors upon the capture of the city in the year 637. The design showed a garden in the bloom of spring, and the carpet was only used when outdoor parties were prevented by stress of weather. Thence arose its name of the "Winter Carpet" or the "Spring of Chosroes." There were trees, flowers, water-channels and pathways. These are just the features of the garden-carpets made a thousand years later, and indeed examples still more recent have the same motives, as those here shown testify. But for the embellishments spoken of by the Arab chronicler—stones clear as crystal for the water, and coloured jewels for the fruit—the description would be applicable, with little modification, to these later carpets. In them may be seen the pools and water-channels, ducks and fishes, pathways, trees and flowering plants. There are sundry variations. Some show a park or hunting-ground, watered by streams or canals and overgrown with a profusion of trees amid which are woodland birds and beasts. The water is rendered by silver or gold thread, or shown in swirling eddies, zig-zags or rippling lines, generally in pale blue on white or red. Occasionally the water is represented as a brook following its natural winding course through the landscape, with flowers springing up at its margin and trees growing on the banks. Sometimes there is a formal pool in the middle, with seated figures around accompanied by musicians or attendants with fruit and wine.

In at least one carpet the water appears to cover almost the whole space, for the parallel zig-zag lines (which enclose small "islands" with trees and birds) are a recognized symbol for water. A simple flower garden is shown in the well-known carpets made for the palace of Amber near Jaipur in the first half of the 17th century. Each plant, in full blossom, is delineated in its natural form, down to the root.

The larger carpet here illustrated (Fig. 1) was acquired not long ago by the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, from a private owner. The water-channels are white, with zig-zag lines in blue, and dark blue spotted fishes. Four of the spaces containing the trees and flowers (those nearest the middle) are white; four others are blue and the rest are red. The border is deep blue. In the pattern there are four tones of blue and two of green, besides deep purple, red, pink, yellow and white. The colours of the outlines are chosen to harmonize with those of the spaces they limit. The scene is obviously intended for a garden. Some of the floral details are already lapsing into the style of many Persian carpet-designs in which the idea of a garden is less apparent. If we must assign a locality of origin to this carpet, it may be attributed to the North-Western provinces of Persia, at some time in the 18th century. The attribution of carpet-patterns to one district or another of Persia is a matter full of uncertainty, for they are known to

have been carried from one end of the country to the other. Thus it comes about that designs originating, for example in Herat or Khurasan, are to be found reproduced in the work of the Central Provinces, and ultimately on the North-Western boundary.

The other carpet here illustrated (Fig. 2) was recently given to the Victoria and Albert Museum by the executors of the late Lady Marling, C.B.E., who spent some years in Persia with her husband, Sir Charles Marling, G.C.M.G., C.B., then British Minister at Teheran. The plan of the design is obviously a garden, although there is a suggestion of a prayer-niche, with some emphasis given to the masonry of the spandrels, in three of the squares. The colours of the central panels are dark and light blue, red, yellow and white. The border has white panels on a red ground. The pathways are green. In spite of similarities, there are obvious points of difference between the two carpets here illustrated. The naturalism of the fruit-trees, found in both, contrasts with the formality of the willows in the second. The borders differ considerably. One has a row of cypresses and flowering shrubs; the other conforms to a well-known type, cartouche and quatrefoil alternating. But perhaps the difference is emphasized more by the absence of any central motive than anything else. None of the squares is in the middle. Perhaps this carpet was woven in the neighbourhood of Shiraz in South-West Persia. Some have recognized Bakhtiari influence, or even Bakhtiari work, in this carpet. For more than two thousand years those wandering tribes are believed to have roamed over the region between the neighbourhood of Ispahan and the head of the Persian gulf. They have long been carpet-weavers, using the horizontal loom, nomad-fashion, out of doors. The patterns they favour are those in which the space is divided into small squares. Their carpets have been chiefly made for their own use, finding their way into foreign markets only in recent times.

A fragment of the border of an old Persian garden-carpet, in the possession of Mr. George Mounsey, C.M.G., is here reproduced (Fig. 3).

The row of cypress-trees and shrubs recalls the border of the first carpet. There are also the birds and the little wisp of cloud. Just such a border edges the larger water-channels in a well-known carpet belonging to the Hon, H. McLaren in London. There are many carpet-designs showing nature less restrained by human agency. They represent woodland scenes, enlivened by animals and birds.

Further afield, in the carpets of Chinese Turkestan, and even among the Kirghiz tribes of the north, many garden-desigps recall the more accomplished work of Persia and India.

V.—GIRI-GOVARDHANA-DHĀRANA: A KANGRA MINIATURE.

By THE EDITOR.

THOUGH not wholly unknown, the heroic feat of Śrî-krishna in "holding aloft the hillock Govardhan"—one of the amazing exploits of "Krishna-lîlâ" (sports of Krishna)—is very sparsely represented in the surviving examples of the miniatures of the Kangra school, so rich in their illustrations of the episodes of Vaishnava stories, both in their erotic and tender phases, and in their dramatic and heroic situations. Dr. Coomaraswamy, in the chapter of his work devoted to the Krishna-lîlâ (*Rajput Painting*, Vol. I, pages 26—40), enumerates the important exploits of Krishna, which are generally represented in the Kangra miniatures, but he does not notice the theme of *Giri-Govardhana-Dhāraṇa*, apparently no illustration of the subject having been discovered at the time of the publication of his work. The example here reproduced in colour from the collection of Mr. Ajit Ghose is not only a

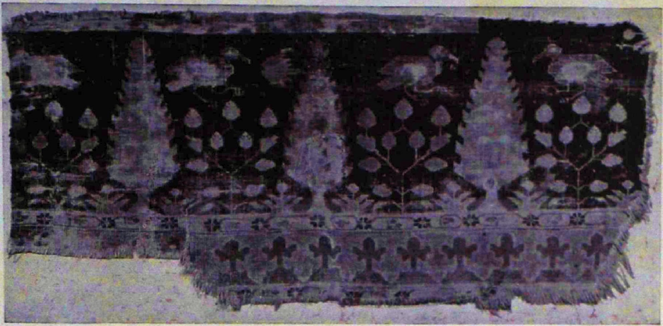

Fig 3. Portion of the border of a Garden-Carpet, Persia; 17th Century.
Collection of Mr. George Mounsey, C. M. G.

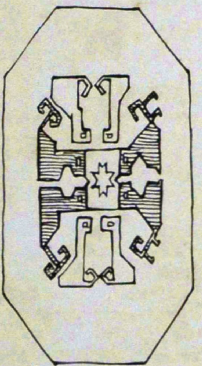

Fig 4. Ducks in a pool.
Design in the middle of an Anatolian Carpet,
("Bergamo"); early 19th Century.

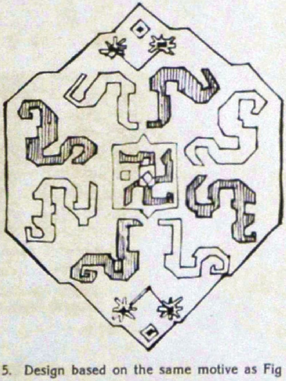

Fig 5. Design based on the same motive as Fig 4.
From the middle of a Caucasian Carpet,
("Kazak"); 19th Century.

GIRI-GOVARDHAṆA-DHĀRAṆA

Collection Bhārat Kalā Pariṣad

distinguished illustration of the theme, but also a very distinguished example of the Kangra school.

Govardhana is a small hill near Vrindāvan, with very hallowed associations of many an exploit of Krishna. According to the story given in the Bhāgavata purāṇa, Krishna persuaded the inhabitants of Vrindāvan to give up *Indra-pujā*, the old cult of Indra, the God of Rain and Thunder. This enraged the great god, who vented his wrath on the village by an irate outpouring of rain and thunder which threatened the destruction of the village and its terrified inhabitants who sought the protection of Krishna. The hero of Vrindāvan, coming to the rescue, held up by the end of his little finger the hillock Govardhana as a canopy over the heads of the villagers, and successfully cut off the rain and thunder of the irate god. There are various vernacular versions of the episode current in different parts of India, but the most attractive is that given in the *Sūra-Sāgara:*—

Āju Vraja mahā ghatanu ghana ghero
Ava Vraja rākhu ehi avasara, sava chitavata mukha tero
Koti chhānave megha vulāyi āni kiyo Vraja dero
Musala dhāra tutai chahu disi ten bhai gayo divasa ādhero
Itanî kahata Jasodā nandana Govardhana tana hero
Kiyo upāya girivara dharive ko mahi ten pakāri ukhero
Sāt divasa jala varakhi sirani, hāra māni mukha phero
Śrî-pati kiyo sahāya Sūra-Prabhu vund na āvata nero.—*Sūra-Sāgara.**

10th Skanda, Song 87, page 215, Vyankateswar Press, Edition (1953).

A very significant detail of the story, also indicated in our illustration here, is the assistance given by Rādhā, as the spiritual energy of Krishna—illustrating the well-known theory of the duality of the divinity known as the *Śaktivāda*, according to which the Lord is powerless to act without this spiritual energy, his "better half," his *Śakti*, power, or spiritual essence. It is said that, true to this idea, Krishna was able to lift up Giri-Govardhana only with the help and co-operation of Rādhā, his spiritual counterpart, the essence of his strength and power. This significant feature is current in a popular Bengali doggerel, put into the mouth of the birds *Śūka* and *Sāri*, the male bird being a partisan of Krishna, while *Sāri* taking up the cause of Rādhā and extolling her powers and virtues as superior to those of Krishna. The prayers of *Śūka* in reciting the virtue of Krishna being contradicted naïvely but effectively in a corresponding verse answering to the virtue of Rādhā—to the complete discomfiture of *Śūka:* "Śūka vale āmār Krishna giri dhare chhila sārî vale āmār Rādhā vala sanchārila naile pārve kena". Sūka said "my Krishna had held aloft the hill," Sārī said, "my Rādhā provided the energy, otherwise how could he lift?"

Our illustration is a wonderful pictorial version which presents the theme with a peculiar realism—without discounting its mystery and romance, and without omitting any important or significant detail. The "littleness" of the power of the Rain-God, is indicated by the miniature effigy of the god on his elephant at the top, frantically displaying all his powers over rain and thunder. All the inhabitants of the village

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*We owe the following translation of the passage to Rai Krisna Das of Benares:—

"To-day thick clouds have surrounded Vraj.
Kanh, here is an opportunity to save Vraj; all are looking up to you:
(Indra) has summoned 960 millions of clouds, which are hanging over Vraj;
From all sides torrents of rains are falling;
In the day nightly darkness has spread."
On hearing (these words of the people of Vraj) the son of Jaśodā looked towards Gobardhan:
Took steps to hold it and snatched it from the earth:
The clouds having rained continuously for 7 days, were exhausted and acknowledging defeat turned their back.
Sūra says (my) lord helped and not a drop of rain touched (came near) the people of Vraj.

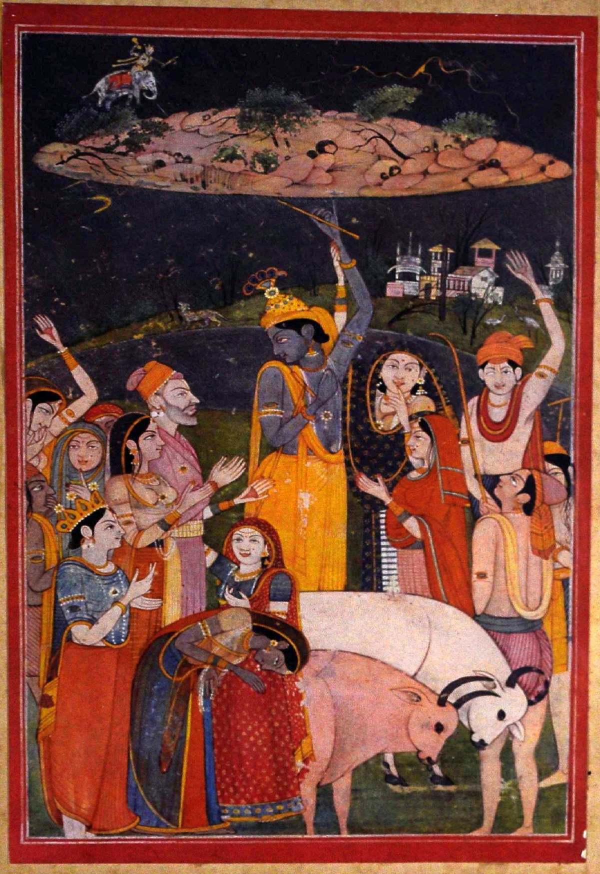
have gathered under the canopy held up by the hero, leaving their homesteads deserted and empty, symbolized by the howling and lonely jackal at the outskirts. The slanting darts of rain run down, round the group unable to drench them. Some of the figures hold out their hands in playful challenge, very skilfully echoing the outstretched hands of the hero at the centre. Each member of the group is given individual poses and attitudes (generally repeated in a parallel gesture, almost anticipating one of the principles of modern cubism which secures emphasis by repetition), which combine to make up a singularly sensitive composition, vibrating with tender emotion and admiration. The lady on the foreground, who bends her head in pious devotion, is echoed in her pose by a similar attitude of a couple of cows, who bend their heads in magnificent curves but with almost human feeling and dignity. The figure of Rādhā, who rather bashfully touches her lips, as she stretches her right hand to provide the strength for the heroic deed, is paralleled by an almost similar head in a similar attitude. These skilful repetitions of parallel figures and graceful gestures combine to build up an effective harmony and orchestration of the lines in the composition of the whole group. Incidentally, the various sub-groups make between themselves little entities quite independent of the whole. Thus the three human figures and the two cows in the foreground, make a perfect picture by themselves, while the five closely knitted figures on the right make another independent group, while the oblong panel of the hill with India on his elephant, makes a third self-contained picture. It is by the skilful harmonization of these little groups that a whole symphony has been weaved by the magic brush of the artists' creation. In this quality as also in the types of the figures, our picture very closely resembles the well-known "Kālîya damana" (Rajput Painting, Plate LIII) and one is inclined to attribute the two miniatures to the brush of one and the same artist.

It may be recognized that the perfection of the composition of the picture could only have evolved after many humbler efforts and the ordered and organized grouping itself must have grown out of trial compositions, before this perfect form evolved in the miniature here reproduced in colour. Of the subject "Kālîya damana" various trial versions have been traced before a highly organized and sensitive composition was arrived at. Similarly, the subject of Giri-Govardhana-dhārana has evolved through many earlier versions, one of which we are able to reproduce here from the collection of the Bhārat-Kalā-Bhawan (Museum of Indian Art), Benares, which affords very instructive comparison. The main actors in the drama and the general scheme of composition are very much the same. There has been obvious improvement in the attitudes and poses and in the general grouping, and in the later version, the composition has attained greater cohesion and concentration, and a more sensitive and organized presentation worthy of the gravity of the theme.

REVIEWS.

CATALOGUE OF THE GEORGE EUMORFOPOULOS COLLECTION OF CHINESE, COREAN AND SIAMESE PAINTINGS: BY LAURENCE BINYON OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM, 75 PLATES, IN COLOUR, 39 PP. PUBLISHED BY ERNEST BENN LTD., LONDON. PRICE: £s.55

THIS is another of the series of stupendous tomes, lavishly illustrated with all the superb quality and aesthetic judgment that we have been taught to associate with the publications of the house of Benn. The present volume devoted to a distinguished collection of Chinese, Corean and Siamese Paintings, fully maintains the reputation of its predecessors devoted to Chinese ceramics. The excellent examples, many of them of first rank, reproduced in this volume, bespeak the discriminating taste and fine connoisseurship of the famous collector who has collaborated so generously to make his collections so easily accessible to students and connoisseurs. Mr. Binyon's Introduction couched in a very dignified and restrained yet quite



GIRI-GOVARDHANA-DHĀRI

KANGRA SCHOOL

By the courtesy of Mr. Agit Ghosh

enthusiastic terms give a rapid review of the outstanding items in the collection which are fully described and annotated in the catalogue with liberal references to related literature. He is forced to follow a principle of classification—by subject rather than by period for which he apologizes as "inevitably crude." But under the circumstances this was the only proper course. The section of religious painting (which in Chinese Buddhist Art is "hardly surpassed elsewhere"), rather weak in the present collection is somewhat compensated by a noble presentation of "A Deified Personage" (Plate XIV). In the section of "Bird and Flower," the famous and now widely known Sung masterpiece "Bird on a Bough," exquisite in its equilibrium is undoubtedly the finest gem of the whole collection. The novel features of the collection are the two examples each of Corean and Siamese Painting, both unploughed fields in Far Eastern Painting. The examples of Corean Painting in the collection, "less fine and fastidious in styles than Chinese work, are robust in design." On Siamese Painting Mr. Binyon's remarks are worth quoting: "Here it is India rather than China which provides the original inspiration. One has a feeling that Siamese Painting ought to be more 'exquisite' than it is; a certain coarseness in the actual workmanship seems foreign to the mood in which these slim figures, with their half-smiling lips, are conceived." Altogether the collection offers a rich and variegated nosegay of fine flavour.

G.

THE LIGHTS OF CANOPUS, ANVAR-I-SUHAILI, DESCRIBED BY J. V. S. WILKINSON, PREFACE BY LAURENCE BINYON, TEXT 53 PP., 36 COLOUR FACSIMILES, THE STUDIO LIMITED, LONDON, 1929. PRICE: 30 SHILLINGS.

IT is indeed very gratifying to students of Oriental Painting, that one by one the various documents of Near Eastern Pictorial Art are being published to popularize the claims of a phase of Eastern culture, which had indeed few English connoisseurs to champion their cause a decade ago. The illustrated Manuscript in the British Museum of the Persian version of the Indian fables of Hitopadesa, which we owe to Husein-ibn-Ali Vaiz, [who lived in Herat during the reign of Sultan Husain Mirza (1469—1506) and who called the stories "Anvar-i-Suhaili," in compliment to his patron, Shaikh Ahmad-al-Suhaili, minister to the Sultan], has been known to scholars for a long time, having been noticed in Rieu's Catalogue, and several times reproduced in individual pieces by Dr. Coomaraswamy in the *Modern Review* as far back as 1910, and recently in the *Artibus Asiae*. But the laudable enterprize of the "Studio" for the first time makes these interesting miniatures available in a convenient form, in passable colour reproductions. The illustrations are very important documents of the history of the development of Moghul Painting, and as illustrations of phases of the life of the people, away from the atmosphere of the court, they have a charm and a *naïveté* all their own. Bearing a colophon dated 1610 A.D., the illustrated Manuscript obviously belongs to the Jahāngîr period, most of the illustrations having been executed 5 years after the death of Akbar, and though nominally belonging to the reign of Jahāngîr, they continue the style and quality of the Akbar period to which at least 3 miniatures belong. In many respects unique, the miniatures of this Manuscripts cannot be said to represent the highest waterwork of Moghul Painting, though their popular flavour, and the atmosphere of the manners and mannerism of contemporary Indian life, invest them with a peculiar charm. As illustrations of animal life, they are not even worthy of the best manners of the Mansur School, though the dramatic and humorous presentation of the animal motifs in these beast fable have indeed an attractiveness which is difficult to resist. Mr. Wilkinson, in this maiden effort in the field of Indian Painting, has performed his task admirably without any claims to scholarship or authority. With laudable enthusiasm he claims that "these miniatures can stand comparison with the most celebrated European book of hours." His preferences for the merits of individual miniatures may not find acceptance with trained connoisseurs. And his praise heaped on comparatively mediocre pieces (Plates XVI, XX, XXVII), sometimes gets the better of his connoisseurship, but we are grateful to him, all the same, in pleading the cause of a better appreciation of the qualities of Indian Painting in the future than have been accorded to them in the past. A greater familiarity of the data of Indian Painting would have led our author to gauge the significance of the various details in these interesting documents, e.g., the presence of tassels or pompons in the ornaments of the ladies (Plates XVII, XXIII, XXVIII) which offer very valuable clues for dating a phase of Rajput Painting, on which detail our author comments, without realizing their significance. In Plate XXXVI, the object flourished by the attendant on the extreme right is not a "torch" but a *chauri*, or fly-whisk. Excepting the miniatures illustrated in Plates V, IX, XXXVI, XXIX, there is hardly anything in these illustrations reminiscent of the Persian or Herat school, except in the glowing colours, sometimes very skilfully attuned to a melodious harmony in the manner characteristic of the "Jahāngîr Shāhi" miniatures. Considering the cheap price of this admirable publication it is unfair to expect the colour reproductions, as many as 36 in number, to be very accurate facsimiles of the original, but it is, all the same, necessary to caution those who have not seen the originals, to remember that they are passable, though not quite accurate and faultless colour facsimiles, a fact which can be easily verified by

a comparison of Plate XXIX, Aga Rizas' miniature of "The Feast of the King of Yaman," with the more accurate colour version published by the British Museum. We have however no hesitation in complimenting the author and the publisher on a very praiseworthy production.

G.

KUNSTFORM UND YOGA IM INDISCHEN KULTBILD. BY PROFESSOR HEINRICH ZIMMER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HEIDELBERG. LARGE OCTAVO, 191, PP., WITH 36 ILLUSTRATIONS AND 9 FIGURES IN THE TEXT (PRICE NOT INDICATED) WITH INDEX OF SANSKRIT NAMES AND TERMS, FRANKFURTER VERLAGS, BERLIN, 1926.

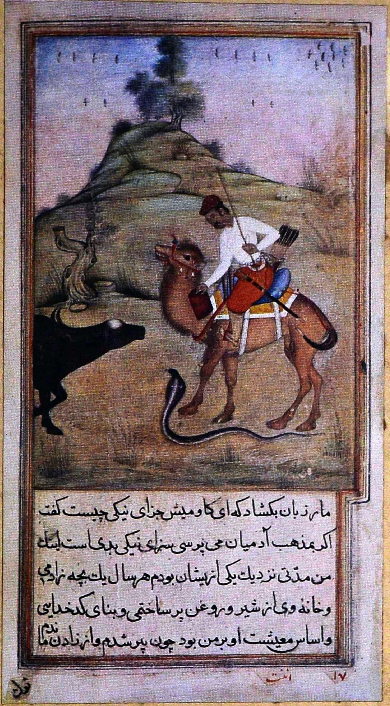
THIS astonishing book is, to the present reviewer at any rate, to whom it makes so many revelations, a succession of delights. It should bear one of those joyous titles by which the volumes of Italian stories were known to Shakespeare in his childhood. "Art-form and Yoga in Indian Sacred Imagery" does not give one the slightest indication of the exhilaration of mind and spirit produced by this exemplary piece of research. To one resident in the heart of India, and surrounded by the mysteries of Hindu symbolism, it is no small matter to have the veil lifted, not to reveal the unspeakable thought it their duty, but to bring us nearer the ineffable. The volumes edited by Arthur Avalon, to whose pioneer work Prof. Zimmer offers a tribute of praise, are not for the ordinary reader, hardly even for the scholar, unless he be a specialist. But this book puts before the public a body of secret lore, the flower of the mind of a wonderfully gifted people, which cannot be neglected in any estimate of Hindu culture. Moreover, it is infinitely suggestive of values in form in all directions of creative energy, including music and poetry, and this at a time when the world, under the delusion that form is a fettering, is so ready to abandon itself to the inchoate. The subjects treated of include the following:—

Indian cult-imagery and classical art; the devotion to figural cult-imagery; outward sight and inward vision; linear structure in magic and cult; linear yantras with figural filling (Lamaist mandalas); Borobudur, the language of signs and proposition in the canon of Indian art. The illustrations are largely photographs of typical images of Jina, Buddha, Vishnu, Sundaramūrti-swāmin, Śiva, Lakshmī, Mahāsukha and Vajradhara, of the architecture of Borobudur, and of the mystical geometrical figures called yantra, with their super-dimensional suggestions. There is a wealth of psychological analysis as well as of technical detail which offer to the student most tempting fare, and an introduction into a world little dreamt of in the West. These technical details can hardly be dealt with here. As an example of the less technical writing, I would draw attention to the following differentiation between the appeal of classical art and that of India: "Classical art appeals to the eye and captivates it. For it is eloquent. It wishes to express itself and can do so. It unfolds its whole at a multitudinous cogeries of relations and is articulated like a sentence of human speech in which a meaning expresses itself, as it breaks up into a number of word-signs which bind themselves into a unity of many connections. Its power to enchant the eye depends on the wealth of relations of its parts. It impels the eye to circling movements, which survey the work of art on all sides and cause the beholders to revolve about it in a magical circle which is ever renewed. One side of it relates to the other, since all of it relates to all. The magical wealth of relations of a whole articulated through and through throws the eye as well as the spectator into a happy connection, in which the consciousness of the inexhaustibility of this magical influence makes a necessarily pleasing element of repose. Chinese art produces insatiable desire to see. It calls to the eye: 'Stay a while,—and I am so beautiful.' The quite other and unique charm which a Buddha or many an Indian image of god exercises upon us comes from the great calm of those images. They call our gaze not with their essence which they display before us, for they never display it for themselves, they simply repose in their being. A pure being, which does not divide itself in any knowledge of itself, which does not become objective to itself, and which lets us go from its presence without wishing to become any affair of ours. The magic of classical art rests on its complete articulation, which furnishes the eye with a sum of emotional suggestion. The eye cannot escape the fascination of it, because, once caught, it finds itself in an immaterial system of attractions for the sight, which reveal the orbits of its sphere of action. Classical art is full contour, which desires to lead the eye; the lively play of its planes undulates in lights whose brightness leads the eye along its orbits, whose depths of shadow absorb it caressingly into itself. It is there for display, whereas Indian sculpture reposes in self-sufficience."

E. E. S.

SEVENTEEN SILHOUETTES: BY KANU DESAI WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY NANALAL C. MEHTA, I.C.S., 17 MOUNTED PLATES, AHMEDABAD, 1929.

WE welcome this beautiful portfolio containing seventeen examples of silhouettes by a young Guzerati artist Mr. Kanu Desai. Every artist cannot turn out to be a supreme master, and we commend the courage of this young craftsman in devoting his talent to an humbler bye-path of art instead of



The Camel-Rider, The Snake, & The Buffalo.
By ANANT (Moghul School).
From An Illustrated Ms. of Anwar-i-Suhaili, British Museum.
By the courtesy of "The STUDIO."

crowding the much-trodden highway of paintings of ambitious subjects. As a matter of fact he breaks new ground, and is a pioneer in applying the principles of silhouette to Indian subjects. There is nothing derogatory on any artist to choose this humbler occupation. The art is a very difficult one requiring keen insight into the inherent beauty of a given subject and the subtle power of choosing the essentials of a scene or an attitude, and to express it within the severest limitations of a flat black and white presentation, without any aids of shadows or modelling. We are happy to attest that the artist has made a great hit, though all his experiments are not equally successful, most of them are excellent *tour de force* of fine conception and treatment. The "Pandu and Madri" (Plate 3) is undoubtedly the best, in its intense concentration and its correct atmosphere. The album could have been usefully abridged in size by using smaller mounts. We wish the artist great success in this new adventure.

G.

MUSSULMAN PAINTING. BY E. BLOCHET. TRANSLATED BY C. M. BINYON. INTRODUCTION BY SIR E. D. ROSS. TWELFTH TO SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. PP. 10 + 123, WITH 12 PLATES IN COLOUR AND 188 PLATES IN COLLOTYPE. LONDON: METHUEN, 1929. PRICE, £3 3s. NET.

THIS book is of value for the numerous reproductions of Persian paintings in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, which are not otherwise readily accessible to students. The very discursive text is mainly devoted to the thesis "Only one art has ever existed, and that is Classic Art" (p. 104); perhaps this explains the following extraordinary passage—"Only the placid and poetical legend of Rama was sympathetic to the simplicity and nobility of the Greek genius, and so it is illustrated as we find it in the schools of Jammu and Kangra, a number of pictures showing charming episodes in the life of the hero, while the exaggerations of Vishnuism and the monstrosities of Jainism hold no temptation for any Hellenic artist" (p. 52). Comment is needless.

ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY.

EPOCHEN DES INDISCHEN KULTUR VON HERMANN GOETZ MUSEUM FOR VOLKERKUNDE IN BERLIN, MIT 8 KARTEN, 589 PP. LEIPZIG: VERLAG KARL W. HIERSEMANN, 1929. PRICE, R. M. 68.

THIS careful and comprehensive work, characteristic of so much that is being done for public enlightenment in Germany to-day, is a quarto volume of 552 pages, with 34 double columned pages, indexed names of places and persons, and a general index of the pages. There are no illustrations but eight maps of the culture-zone of India, the wanderings of the invading conquerors, early European sea-traffic, the natural states and border states of early days, the Chola sea-prince, and Hindu colonization. The epochs determined upon by Dr. Goetz are those of Indo-Aryan culture, classical Hindu culture, the Indian middle age, modern India (from the Mahomedan conquest of Sind) and India of to-day. In detail, the subjects of the clear and sympathetic discussion, addressed to the general body of educated readers rather than to the specialist, are as follows. After an introduction dealing with the pre-historic evidences and the original races, the author passes on to migration into India and the conquest of the Punjab, he describes the material culture, household economy and social life of the Vedic tribes, their gods and their sacrificial rites. Then under the happy caption "Ritterkultur des Epos," he deals with the beginning of feudalism in Madhyadesha, the Kshatriyas, Brāhmans and the caste system, the first infiltrations of autochthonous peoples into Aryan culture, magical sacrifices and the deities of the Earth, the Yajur Veda and the Brāhmanas, the Mahābhārata and its strata, the culmination of feudalism, the battle of the Pāṇdavas and Kauravas, later feudalism, the idylls of the Rāmāyana and the forerunners of the Rāmāyana, the ethical transforming of religion, asceticism and Brāhman-Ātman speculation, the later Brāhmanas and the Upanishads. Under the heading Civic Culture, he treats of the aristocracy of towns, republic of aristocracy and small kingdoms of the people, courtesans and merchants; of the middle classes, of renunciation of the world, of the intellectualizing of faith, Sāmkhya and Yoga; of Mahavīra and Buddha and early Buddhism. Then follows a section on Indo-Aryan world power, the Chakravartins and the development of world-power, Chandragupta and the Maurya Kingdom, the Arthashāstra, official control, Pātaliputra, the decline of Aryan power, Aśoka, the Buddhist church and Aryan art. This ends the first main section on Ancient India. The second section dealing with the classical Hindu culture, begins with Western influences, Persian, Greek and Scythian, Bactrian, and the Indo-Greek, the Mahāyāna section of Buddhism and the religion of a Redeemer. It also includes account of religious art, of Taxila and Gandhāra, of Greco-Buddhist art and its development, of Asvagosha—classical Sanskrit literature, of Kanishka and Kushana civilization. The main part of the section treats of the Gupta civilization and all its activities,—Early Hinduism, the Aryanized cults of the aborigines, Śivaism, Vishnuism, the Brahmanic Renaissance, Purāṇas, the Gupta-kings, the Huns and Harsha, the secular life of the time, Literature and the Drama, Science and Art, Bharhut and Sanchi, Amaravati and the classical art. The section ends with an account of Indian colonization in Ceylon, Siam, Burma, Malaysis and Annam. The third part of the book is entitled the Indian Middle Age, and mainly records spiritual conditions for the darkness and chaos following the devastation of the Huns to the mystical movements of the

sixteenth century. In less than a hundred pages we find necessarily the briefest accounts of such great matters and events as the conflict between Buddhism and Sivaism, the Sivaite mystics and the Vishnuvite scholastics, Śankara, Rāmānuja, Dravidian literature, the Pallavas, Chola naval power, Chinese and Arabian trade, the Chalukyas and the Jaina Renaissance, Bengal and the Palas, the doctrine of Buddhism, Renaissance literary poetry, the style of mediæval Temple-building and the plastics of the Śilpaśāstras. The last part of this section deals with Rajput, the feudal disintegration and the culture of the age of chivalry, the Rajputizing of the older Hindu states, the epos of chivalry, Rādhā Krishna, Chaitanya and Tulsidās. The section on the modern period of India is largely concerned with Mohamedan history. The first part deals with the epoch of Mohamedan colonization, the conquest of Sind and Hindusthan, Mahmud of Ghazni and the kings of Ghor, the Khilji and Tughlak dynasties, Indo-Muslim culture, Vijayanagar and the Islamic states of the Deccan. The second part is on the Moghul Empire and its relations with Hindu civilization, the absolutism, productive economy, religion, art and poetry of the time, the power of women, efficiency, social misery, Aurangzeb and the religious war with the Mahrattas. The third part treats of the break up of the Moghul Empire, and the various participators in the process, the conquest of Delhi by Nadir Shah, the Mahratta rule, English sovereignty, art, science and Urdu literature. The last section contains a very brief discussion of the development of European influence in India, contemporary culture and political movements. This book, which has taken several years of labour to complete, is written in a simple and pleasing style, and forms one of the most readable summaries of Indian history in the fuller sense of the term, that exists in any language. The author has not been afraid of quotations, indeed, nearly half of this book consists of such matter, translations chiefly from Sanskrit works (in prose and verse), though there are many also from other languages of India from Chinese, Tibetan, Turkey, Persian, Portuguese, Italian, French and English. This adds great variety to the book and any young person in Germany who studies it will have a far greater body of pertinent knowledge of India than all but a minute percentage of young Indian possess. It is difficult to make a choice of passages to illustrate the views and conclusions of the author, but for this Journal it is probably as well to throw some light on the background of æsthetic movements. And how vast a part this background of the Buddha's life and teaching has played in all parts of Asia except the West! In his account of Aśoka, Dr. Goetz has the following passage: "He was the first in India who had stone building and sculpture executed in grand style. Certainly only very little of these works is extant. How completely the enormous capital Pātaliputra has disappeared we have already seen. The Maurya ruins of Taxila in the Bhir hill are still little explored, and the trial excavations showed only small results. In Sanchi, where Aśoka allowed several disciples to erect stūpas on the relics, they were so dismantled during the Sung dynasty for the purpose of enlargement, that they can scarcely be examined; an assembly hall is just recognizable from the foundation and was replaced during rebuilding. Aśoka's stūpa at Kathmundu in Nepal, a semi-spherical building, was utterly disfigured during its transformation into the Lamaist Svayambhū Caitya; and only the foundation of the stūpas of Panch Pahari came to light. Almost the only monuments remaining are the caves of the ascetics at Barābar near Rājagriha, for the sect of Ajivikas, and memorial pillars, of the Emperor at different places sacred to Buddhism, such as Sārnāth, Pātaliputra, Lauriya, Allahabad, Rampurva, and others. Foremost are the shining polished chambers excavated in the rocks and under them the Sudama caves, as it were round huts turned into stone, often found in old representations as dwellings of ascetics, in front of which is a longish rectangular anteroom. A portal with a frieze of elephants and a horse-shoe-shaped pent house conducts a wall over these. This horse-shoe-shaped roof-curve with the rafters visible on the underside seems to be old Aryan; at all events closely related types are found over Lycian graves. In later ages this horse-shoe arch, as well as the inner room, were to play a great part in Indian art, and as a decorative motif the arch has prolonged its life almost until to-day. The fragments of stūpas of Panch Pahari suggest the same carefulness of work. In contrast with the later buildings, whose central form shows only a radial wall-scaffold, interstics of which were filled with pebbles, these stūpas were massively constructed of carefully arranged layers of tiles. The memorial pillars also show an extraordinarily fine polish. Generally they were let in to the ground without substructure, only supported by the surrounding wall. Generally the shaft was covered with inscriptions in which Aśoka addressed himself to his subjects. The capital and bell of palm leaves, like those of Persepolis, but not identical with them; over that was an architrave (abacus) decorated with fan-palm motifs, "wheel of the law," deer, lions, bulls, or wild geese, which always bore various symbols,—a zebra, crouching lions, and so on. In these movements there reveals, itself a strong Persian, occasionally even Greek influence. If one regards them in the light of the Western influences present in the rest of the court life, this causes no wonder. However we must not go so far as to see in this any dependence of Indian Art upon Western. Their influences were limited to the court, and alongside was an independent indigenous art, which rivals itself particularly in the elephant image of Dhouli, the statues (especially of Yaksha divinities) from Baroda, Didargunj, Besnagar, Parkham, more remotely in a series of terracottas of varying

origin. They all show the same careful work as the art of the Court, the same loving self-absorption in Nature, but also a clumsiness which does not preclude a certain monumental character and which, like the archaic Greek sculpture, does not yet know how to make a frieze of a cloven block of stone. The limbs are stuck into the bodies, the picture is awkward, the proportions forced. But the unwonted material may be to blame, for by contrast, the terracottas are particularly living works of art. Sometimes they are single heads, sometimes naked, and often winged figure of goddesses." Of Kālidāsa he writes with a good deal else: "Kālidāsa's powers are one of the main sources from which romantic literature shaped its picture of India. And all that we find of languishing sentimental unreality in the work of such artists as Heine, Goethe and Schumann is most involuntarily due to Kālidāsa. The same sentimentality and softness is also a characteristic of Kālidāsa, but with him it is only an expression of his time, the already effiminate later period of Gupta civilization. His work caused among the romantic writers a veritable storm of enthusiasm. Śakuntalā, which was the first of his dramas to become known in Europe, aroused Goethe's highest ecstacy. Certainly there is no longer here the dramatic weight of the other dramas of a Bhāsa or Śudraka. The tension of action slackens under the abundance of lyric, but what fills both is the noblest humanity. Instead of being characterization, often not free from coarse drollery, there is everywhere a visible soul-life of finely pictured, somewhat inactive people, tender, delicate, affectionate and kind, which influences also the life of surrounding Nature. All of one texture of the noblest animation, Nature and man, animal and God, are dominated by the same highly differentiated spirit." As specimen of the art criticism of Dr. Goetz, I select the following in which he discusses later Moghul painting:—

"The painting, too, becomes a sort of Baroque and Rococo. Already in subject-matter a complete change has come in, characteristic of the spirit of the time. The heroic subject of battles and events of state which were so typical of the time of conquest of Akbar, have long vanished; the representative court-scenes of the brilliant period of Shah Jahan are gone. In their place there comes a romantic, more unworldly minor art of the harem. Fairy tales and romances, in innumerable little genre pictures of lovers in the garden or feasting or keeping secret tryst. Drinking, gaily dressed ladies and naked bathing woman—dancing and feasting. All the sensual immorality of the epoch is to be found here, to its credit, not in any coarse manner, but rather with a sentimental tenderness and sweetness. In the miniature of the courts of Rajput chieftains the lyric mysticism of the age of chivalry was taken up again; and illustrated in pictures of wonderful delicacy of feeling and spirit, first, towards 1800 art became obscure and more than unequivocal. Moreover applied art, as we know it, paid homage to women and her beauty in the same way; the weapons, ivory work of South India, especially the charming pictures of dancing women between animals and flowery tendrils. Meanwhile as regards style, painting has made quite its own, the chiaroscuro manner of Shah Jahan's time; also a greater depth of formative power was striven for, but on the other hand, the method of drawing was more conventional, under a continual and always rapidly Indianized influx of European suggestions. At the end of the sixteenth century the hitherto pompous flow of line dissolved into rich play of movement and line, which, expressly in the Western Himalayan region, has ripened into works of extraordinary heights of art. Then at the beginning of the last century the breaking up began. Amidst a superabundance of inessential details, techniques and artistic perception were lost, until at last only a crude present art was left."

E. E. S.

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A MOGHUL MADONNA.—In the generally eclectic character of the Moghul School of Painting founded by Akbar, the influence of European Painting was a very characteristic and distinctive feature. In the obviously realistic outlook of the Moghul Painters—particularly in their leading phases of portrait painting—contact with European painting was an useful aid. There being nothing inherently different in the outlook and ideals of the Western School and the Moghul, the artists of the latter school very skilfully assimilated many useful elements of European painting. In the earlier stages the Moghul painters assiduously copied all kinds of European painting chiefly made accessible to them through steel and wood engravings brought by the Jesuit Fathers, though original paintings were occasionally presented to the Moghul Emperors. Percy Brown has referred to Akbar's first contact with European painting through the Jesuit Mission at Fatehpur Sikri ("Indian Painting under the Moghuls," p. 166 ff.) Of the religious paintings, in copies or originals, introduced by the Christian missionaries, particular interest attaches to the pictures of the Madonna which were frequent subjects of presents to Akbar and Jahangir. The subject

appears to have particularly appealed to the Moghul artists who have left numerous examples adopted from European originals. How these large sized paintings were translated into Moghul miniature, and adopted to their technique and mannerisms, is very well illustrated in a very interesting example here reproduced from the collection of the Government Art Gallery, Calcutta, by the courtesy of the Board of Trustees of the Indian Museum. We have been unable to identify the original of this Madonna piece. It is quite likely that it is borrowed from some Flemish painting of the School of Quentin Matsys. Any how it is a charming translation of a Christian subject rendered in the technique of Moghul miniatures. The mother and the child, decked in the gorgeous embroideries of pearls and jewels, is given in a sumptuous atmosphere of oriental grandeur from which it is difficult to pick up the original European model. The composition is of considerable power and distinction and in its easy grace and in its feeling and conviction is something more than a mechanical copy of the original model. Indeed in its new dress, and in the magnificient setting of an oval frame with six richly decorative lobes giving it the effect of a well-set jewel, the composition has all the beauty and strength of an original design so effective is the adoption and assimilation of the original model in its Moghul version, adopted to the technicalities of the Indian miniature school. The two oblong panels, one at the top and the other at the bottom, contain a verse (probably from Sadi), which has no bearing on the picture itself and has been introduced as decorative embellishments to set off the centre piece. The verse runs as follows: "Dor Jahān Chandān ke khakî bi qias Waz falaq chandān ke Juyi bishumār" and may be translated thus: "In this world ask from God whatever you desire, and ask from the Heavens things without number."

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A MOGHUL PRINCE.—Of numerous Moghul miniatures of fine quality, which have not yet been noticed in publications on Indian paintings, we are able to reproduce here a very distinguished example from one of the albums in the British Museum, London. It is the profile portrait of a very young prince, richly clad in all the gorgeous array characteristic of the times. Besides the shield, the sword and the dagger, the prince also carries a bow in one hand and gracefully flourishes an arrow in the other. The retainer standing behind is also very richly and elegantly dressed and at first one is unable to distinguish any difference between the royal prince and his retainer. But the artist has been careful in placing the disc of the halo round the head of the prince, whose head-gear is further distinguished by a spray of black feathers dotted with two pearls. These two portraits have a vivacity and a liveliness which invest them with a quality very rare in the average run of the conventional profile portraits, hundreds of which have survived in the albums preserved in many private and public collections. The two portraits echo and support each other by a singular kinship of type and treatment. And as offering a remarkable glimpse of the gorgeous elegance of the manners and costumes of the Moghul courts, this example is of peculiar significance and power. The decorative foliages in the foreground happily bring a note of variety to the blank monotonous background and helps to draw one's attention away from the prince—to the portrait of the retainer, which is drawn with as much meticulous care and conscious elegance as the portrait of the prince himself. The rectangular cross marks across the picture shows that the two portraits were drawn separately and then pieced together into one composition, a practice which was frequently resorted to by many Moghul artists. The prince has not yet been identified, but it is quite possible that he represents one of the sons of Jahangir. The group has to be attributed to a late Jahangir period.

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BHARAT KALA BHAVAN, BENARES.—No more significant testimony could be cited of the fact that Indians have developed a serious interest in the study of Indian Art, than the great gift of a public museum of Indian Art by an Indian, who may be fitly characterized as the Emile Guimet of Benares,—Mr. Rai Krishna Das. This is the first time that a collection of Art has been made over by a munificent benefactor for the benefit of art-education of the public. Cut out of all school and college curriculum, and banned by universities and educational departments, Art in India has been regarded more or less a forbidden fruit, to be carefully kept out of all forms of culture and education. From this point of view, the magnificent gift of Rai Krishna Das is a service to the cause of education, of a magnitude which is not possible to estimate immediately. The place of universal primary education in ancient India was certainly taken by the different forms of the Visual or the Graphic Arts. In this sense the Fine Arts provided the cheapest and easily accessible medium of education and culture, the *lingua franca par excellence*, of ancient India. A museum of Art is in this sense, a cheap and popular university for the illiterate, where all and sundry may gather knowledge without tears and attain culture without strenuous efforts. As the founder of this free university for the illiterate, Rai Krishna Das' name should go down to posterity as an educational benefactor of a large heart and of a singular breadth of vision. We propose to devote an article describing some of the art treasures from this National Gallery of Indian Art.

A MOGHUL MADONNA

Govt. Art Gallery, Calcutta

A MOGHUL PRINCE

British Museum Collection

DEATH OF MR. A. K. MAITRA, C.I.E.

The death of Mr. Maitra, Director and Founder-member of the Varendra Research Society, on the 10th February last, removes the foremost scholar and antiquarian of Bengal, whose place will be difficult to fill in the near future. A busy and a successful lawyer, he devoted his leisure moments to deep and critical studies of many phases of the history of Bengal. His researches into the many phases of the life of "Sirājuddowlā" and "Mir Kāsim" in Bengali, will remain as valuable contributions to history. Though most of his writings are in Bengali, he occasionally contributed and read papers in English, particularly in this Journal. He had a passion for recovering the history of the Art of Bengal, and the many valuable documents that he collected for the Museum of the Varendra Research Society at Rajshahi are evidences of his efforts to reconstruct a lost page of Indian Art. His knowledge of Sanskrit language was deep and extensive and he was one of the few scholars who had an acquaintance with the obscure and unknown technical literature of the *Śilpa Śāstras*, as his many contributions in the pages of "Rūpam" so eloquently testify. It is desirable that his writings, spread over many journals, should be collected and published as a memento to his passion for history and his deep erudition. In him Bengal has lost a scholar of great distinction and an antiquarian of great authority.